THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

Volume XV | New York, Wednesday, April 6, 1932 | Number 23

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Previous issues of THE COMMONWEAL are indexed in the *Reader's Guide* and the *Catholic Periodical Index*.
Published weekly and copyrighted 1932, in the United States by the Calvert Publishing Corporation, Grand Central Terminal, New York, N. Y. United States: $5.00; Foreign: $6.00; Canada: $5.50. Single Copies: $.10.

SERGEANTS AT SEA

THE CURRENT disorder, thinks one of the keenest observers of American economic history, differs from past calamities in that enterprise and investments are being wiped out rather than curtailed or reduced in value. This, in other words, is a whale which swallows Jonah whole rather than his clothes or a part of his anatomy. And it means: Industrial management has not merely overestimated earning capacities, but has actually miscalculated the nature of the terrain on which the present system of earning reposes. Finding himself in a world which allows dire need to exist side by side with overproduction, which has put individual initiative at odds with collective surveillance, and which watches the credit that is equivalent to confidence disappear (as Dr. Virgil Jordan notes in this issue) under the frown of a banking fraternity both defeatist and defeated, the business leader can only prepare for the worst and hope to get off with something just a little less than that.

In a recent dissenting opinion, worthy of the nation's best traditions as few things are just now, Justice Louis D. Brandeis summarized the problem under this caption: "The people of the United States are now confronted with an emergency more serious than war." And after having arrayed the depressing catalogue of this emergency's component parts, the Justice goes on to list the "causes" which economists and business men have been able to discover. These are in the main:

First, "failure to distribute widely the profits of industry has been a prime cause of our present plight." A business mechanism which produces must sell, and sales cannot be made to paupers.

Second, "many persons think that one of the major contributing causes has been unbridled competition. Increasingly doubt is expressed whether it is economically wise, or morally right, that men should be permitted to add to the producing facilities of an industry which is already suffering from incapacity." In other words, the foolish expenditure of the nation's savings in places where there is not merely a dearth of safeguards but an actual likelihood of failure for the investors and others must be halted.

Third, "all agree that irregularity in employment—the greatest of our evils—cannot be overcome unless production and consumption are more nearly balanced. Many insist that there must be some form of economic control." While this control is difficult to define, let alone advocate, in view of our present knowledge of

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economic and social factors, experimentation in the right use of governmental power as an industrial governor offers much hope.

It is gratifying indeed to receive this message from the Supreme Court, for the simple reason that each of the points has been made, more or less emphatically, by all thoughtful economists now studying the situation. But of course, while the battle line is wavering and the sergeants are at sea, it is difficult for anyone except the important commanders-in-chief to indicate practical directions to be followed, here and there, in detail. Justice Brandeis was courageous and lucid enough to offer such directions in a specific case.

What interests us particularly is the close consonance between his remarks and the statements of the encyclical, "After Forty Years," issued nearly a year ago by Pope Pius. On the three points listed above, the Holy Father spoke as follows:

First: "Every effort must be made that at least in the future a just share only of the fruits of production be permitted to accumulate in the hands of the wealthy, and that an ample sufficiency be supplied to the workingmen. The purpose is not that these become slack at their work, but that by thrift they may increase their possessions and by the prudent management of the same may be enabled to bear the family burden with greater ease and security, being freed of that hand-to-mouth uncertainty which is the lot of the proletarian." Here there is no mention, to be sure, of economic laws. The Holy Father is simply demanding justice. But those who once held that economic laws would work without any recognition of the moral law are now busily writing off their losses.

Second: "Free competition, however, though within certain limits just and productive of good results, cannot be the ruling principle of the economic world. This has been abundantly proved by the consequences that have followed from giving a free rein to these dangerous individualistic ideals." That is as clear as daylight.

Third, the Holy Father also does not outline the form of control which is to mitigate the evils of economic and social lawlessness beyond saying that mankind must recognize the guiding force of true principle and unearth the powers of effective government. He has in mind the same evils of which Justice Brandeis speaks, when he says from the papal throne: "It is patent that in our days not alone is wealth accumulated but immense power and despotic economic domination are concentrated in the hands of a few, and that these few are frequently not the owners but only the trustees and directors of invested funds, who administer them at their good pleasure. This power becomes particularly irresistible when exercised by those who, because they hold and control money, are able also to govern credit and determine its allotment, for that reason supplying, so to speak, the life-blood to the entire economic body and grasping, as it were, in their hands the very soul of production, so that no one dare breathe against their will. This accumulation of power, the characteristic note of the modern economic order, is a natural result of limitless free competition."

The diagnoses concur. And the American public will applaud and bless those who, actuated by knowledge of things as they are, boldly and honestly take steps, whether on a large or a small scale, to effect the needed remedy.

WEEK BY WEEK

WHEN The Calvert Associates' eighth annual celebration of the founding of Maryland goes into the record of past events, it will be well to remind ourselves that like all other such occasions its importance and its value really belong to the future. Merely to recall the glories or the numberless beauties of "far-off things and battles long ago," in a mood of romantic reverie, may be delightful pastime, but traditions and events which possess vital values should be employed more realistically. And this thought will be given expression in the addresses of Governor Ritchie of Maryland, the chief speaker at the notable meeting to be held in New York on the evening of April 8; and of Judge Proskauer, and of Father Richard Blackburn Washington, and of the other speakers. All look forward to 1934, when the third century of Maryland history will reach its term. The state of Maryland has its own committee at work in preparation for the great event. So also has Archbishop Curley of Baltimore, who has appointed the eminent historian, Dr. Peter Guilday, of the Catholic University, Father John La Farge, S.J., and the editor of THE COMMONWEAL as a committee to draw up, under the archbishop's direction, an appropriate plan for Catholic participation in the program for 1934. Other groups also are at work—historical societies of Maryland, the Pilgrims of St. Mary's, and, naturally, The Calvert Associates. Lord Howard of Penrith—perhaps better known in this country as Sir Esme Howard—the former British ambassador, at the invitation of Archbishop Curley, is forming a British Committee to cooperate with The Calvert Associates, who, in their turn, have placed their efforts at the disposal of both the Archbishop of Baltimore and the Governor of Maryland. Among those already enlisted by Lord Howard to serve on the British Committee—which, it is hoped, will send a delegation to Maryland in 1934—are the following: Cardinal Bourne, the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Denbigh, Viscount Fitzalen, K.G., Alfred Noyes, C.B.E., Lord Lovat, and, of course, Lord Howard of Penrith himself.

Maryland Day

AS IF to remind The Calvert Associates and their coöperating friends of the need to put forward their best efforts, on the eve of the celebration in New York they received a precious relic of the original Calvert Associates. Mr. W. Scott O'Connor presented to us

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a cross made of the wood of the tree under which Father White, S.J., said the first Mass, on the site of what later was St. Mary's City, after the English colonists landed from the Ark and the Dove—on the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25, 1634, on St. Clement's Island—and proceeded to settle down. The cross was originally the property of Mr. Reverdy Johnson, of Baltimore, who in his time was the leading lawyer of Maryland. He defended the Dred Scott case and the John Merriam case. He was the minister from the United States at the Court of St. James's in President Buchanan's administration. Mr. Johnson was born at St. Mary's. When the tree was cut down a number of crosses and medals were made. One of the crosses was given to him. He bequeathed it to the only Catholic in his family, a Mr. Louis Johnson; and he left it to his son, Louis Johnson, who died in Cincinnati in October, 1930, leaving the cross to his brother-in-law, Mr. W. Scott O'Connor, who now has honored and enriched The Calvert Associates by presenting it to us—having "great pleasure," he assures us, in so doing. The cross will hang in the reception room of THE COMMONWEAL, and we invite those who wish to see so precious a relic, and so powerful an inspiration, to visit this office.

Commissions or Committees

A MATTER of importance as regards the organic law of the nation, was recently decided in the Second Division of the United States Customs Court, in New York, without receiving the consideration in the news that it deserved. This was, on a protest by Sears, Roebuck and Company against the raising of two specific tariff rates, that the President does not have the right to alter tariff phraseology when making rate changes recommended by the Federal Tariff Commission. Chief Justice I. F. Fischer, who wrote the decision, declared that such action by the President was in violation of Article 1 of the constitution and encroached on legislative rights and duties delegated to Congress alone. In summary, the court held, "the constitutional principle preventing executive taxation should not be nullified by judicial construction." This asserts a fundamental which is of wide implication. We hasten to add that we speak as laymen in the law but our modesty does not go so far as to conceal a conviction that the interested onlooker may sometimes see the forest better than the trees can. And by this certainly we do not intend that we think the legal outlook wooden. A sapping of the basic provisions of our constitutional government, we believe, has steadily been progressing through increasing delegation of power to the executive branch and a resultant increase in government by commissions.

EXPEDIENCY has been advanced as the reason for these changes, and it is on the grounds of expediency that we would question them and forestall any suspicion of a mere Bible belt sort of orthodoxy in our attitude toward the constitution. The expediency of adding to tax laws arrived at by Congress a tariff commission with the power to change rates, with the signature and emendations of the President, seems to us to be doubling the uncertainty and instability of the conditions under which business at large is conducted. The uncertainty is trebled for the average merchant as, first, the reasons for the action of a commission are never overtly disclosed as are those of Congress with its open forum of debate, and, secondly, decisions or contemplated decisions of a commission of course do not command all the common instruments of publicity that are given to the actions of Congress. The commission of inquiry into the knockings and laborings and sooty discharges of our legal machinery, has so far as we can discern avoided making any real recommendation of that sovereign remedy, simplification. Complexity will kill us all, if we don't stop it, and upon this conviction we are for a return to the plainest organic government provided by the constitution, unadorned or unequipped with modern gadgets. We are certainly for no weakening of the power or duties of the representative branch in favor of appointed bureaucracies, and speed we believe is not necessarily consonant with expediency. Though Congress, like mankind, may often err, we have only to recall the Wickersham Committee report on prohibition to realize how extremely injudicious the official findings of a committee may be.

Women's Jobs

WRITING on "Women and Unemployment" in the *South Atlantic Quarterly,* Howard Douglas Dozier makes the following points: that "with the equipment and labor at hand we can produce material goods faster than our machinery of distribution can deliver them into consumption, and that our economic and cultural salvation depends upon material consumers who can devote themselves to immaterial production"; that "women, who are by nature and adaptation singularly fitted to furnish the grace for cultivated living, might have become just such a class, but when they found that they no longer needed to do the washing by hand at home, they went in for making washing machines downtown along with the men"; and that, in effect, if more women stayed home, more men would have jobs. These facts are, of course, absolutely true; but, unfortunately for the prospect of a quick attainment of economic and cultural salvation, they are not the only facts in the field. There are the other women, who for many years preceding the present crisis, have gone out into the world to work simply because they must. Fathers and brothers, even in palmy times, could not support them, and fewer and fewer young men could afford to marry them; indeed, they may be found sometimes helping to support fathers, brothers, husbands: and much oftener, of course, their own children. What is to be done about them? Lacking exact statistics, we nevertheless ven-

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ture that they predominate in numbers over those others of their sex who work for secondary reasons; certainly they have established the tradition and set the pace for the wage-earning woman in modern society. And much as that society does need their influence in its homes, and much as jobless men do need their jobs, we know of no way, scientific, just, painless or even possible, of conjuring them back into the homes, or transferring the jobs. To talk as if there were such a way, as if the present tragic mess were in any significant sense imputable to bored or wilful women who petulantly refuse to stay home, is not helping even to clarify the situation, let alone to solve it.

Goethe Week

OBSERVING the centenary of Goethe's death has apparently become part of the general American educational endeavor. First came Columbia University's festival, starred by the dramatic address of Gerhart Hauptmann, who is himself generally considered Germany's foremost living playwright. Still more grandiose in its proportions was the New York celebration of the Goethe Society of America, attended by several thousand persons. Here there was excellent oratory by several distinguished men, headed by Professor Eugene Kuehnemann, a great Goethe scholar and as arresting a speaker as now tramps the earth. The evening was memorable likewise for effective singing of Goethe lyrics, on a scale and with a quality seldom experienced. Mme. Schumann-Heink, Miss Elizabeth Rethberg, Mr. Walter Kirchhoff and a fine ensemble made many who were present realize, for possibly the first time, the eminence of Goethe's lyric genius. Since that time the fires of memory have been lighted in all parts of the country. Other lands have done as much or more. In Paris, for instance, the *Nouvelle Revue Française* emerges with a "Hommage à Goethe" number which is almost breath-takingly good. It is a small, closely-knit world after all, once the vainer businesses of life have been forgotten.

A Symposium

ONE OF those religious symposia which appear periodically in the secular press, is to be found in the current *Cosmopolitan*. The nine contributors who have been asked to write on the topic, "If Christ Should Come Today," are Dean Inge, Henry van Dyke, G. K. Chesterton, Hendrick Van Loon, Charles M. Sheldon, Lewis Browne, J. B. S. Haldane, Aldous Huxley and Margaret Sanger; and the results are as varied as the careers and known opinions of these personages would suggest. It is a phenomenon that one can almost invariably count on that, whatever a man's or woman's mental cast or religious color, he or she will, if taxed, profess some confident and sympathetic knowledge of what the Son of Man meant by His words and deeds. It may be the reverse of accurate or reasoned, but their opinion of that vital Personality is almost never merely disaffected. Experience teaches us the sad lesson that this instinctive and universal sense of Christ's uniqueness in the race does not of itself produce union among men; but we record it, partly because it seems to us a touching fact, worthy of mention, and partly because it may keep us from being thought supercilious in this brief résumé of opinions from so many of which we must dissent. Dean Inge's paper is thoughtful and reverent; but his meditations leave him uncertain of what Christ would do about war, though sure that "He would heartily have approved of eugenics." Mr. Van Loon, on the other hand, tells us that He would be barred from our country as a pacifist. Mr. Haldane opines that He would be shut up as a madman. Dr. van Dyke rests upon Christ's counsels of inwardness, as does Dr. Sheldon—though the latter also says that He would have us join the League of Nations. Dr. Browne transplants Him into the present as a sort of super-Socialist and Mrs. Sanger, by the exercise of a totally invisible logic, links Him with the dispensation she is working for. Mr. Huxley feels that, as "modern science makes it impossible to believe in a personal God," He would orientate His teachings with humanistic philosophy.

MR. CHESTERTON alone focuses all the facts, past and present, implied by the original topic. And if we permit ourselves the indulgence of repeating his words in more detail, it is not merely to exult in the logical grasp and competence of a distinguished fellow Catholic, as contrasted with the inadequacy outlined above. It is because, again as often before, we find what he says an illuminating summing up and a thrilling reminder of truths to which it is vital that we all remain awake. To Catholics, he writes, there is only one answer to the question, "How would Christ solve modern problems if he were on earth today?": "Christ *is* on earth today: alive on a thousand altars; and He does solve people's problems exactly as He did when He was on earth in the more ordinary sense. That is, He solves the problems of the limited number of people who choose of their own free will to listen to Him. . . . I say, and I mean to say, that the Catholic Church continues to advise men as Jesus advised men. And that there has been a collapse of capitalism because it would not listen to Catholicism; exactly as there was a fall of Jerusalem because it would not listen to Jesus." He cites, as a solid example, the "Rerum Novarum," with its three points: the virtual slavery of the masses, the wrongness of Communism as a projected emancipation, and the desirability of widely distributed ownership; and continues: "That is not an old Greek text from the Synoptics; neither is it a purely theological counsel. It is a clear outline of a general course of action; and there was nothing wrong with it, except that nobody acted on it. Now of course it was not very probable that all the modern

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millions of Puritans and pagans, agnostics and anti-clericals, to say nothing of weak and wordly Catholics, would suddenly obey that trumpet-blast like soldiers. They would hardly start instantly to unwind the coil of the combines, to divide private property among the poor. . . . And it was not very likely, on the face of it, that the high priest of Jerusalem and the procurator of Judea would take the advice of a peasant from Nazareth riding on a donkey. But it was good advice; and it looked even better forty years later."

Who Knows?

THE WEATHER would seem to be a safe, non-controversial subject on which one might dwell for a moment as a relief from politics and economics. As someone has said, there has been plenty of it: enough to justify comment. There has been skating on the Grand Canal in Venice. In New York the winter has been so mild that we have opined at various times it was a blessing for all of us—in another season we might have said it was a blessing for the poor. The hydra head of political economy, however, was raised from this apparently peaceful terrain and it has been asserted that what the poor gained in coal and comfort, they lost through missing opportunities to shovel snow around for the city. Put down in plain black and white here, we believe the balance of the arguments, that is to say the weather, was in our favor. One ardent Republican we know has said that the warm winter was part of the administration's program. Lured with overconfidence, we launched on the last day of winter a small boat in which we snatch gasps of fresh air over week-ends on Long Island Sound. The next day it snowed, and our friend when we reproached him, said that it was consistently the program of his party that the government should keep out of the weather. Another friend who died in 1930, once said that a friend of his who knew someone in the federal weather department in Washington, had heard that a comparison of mean temperatures ever since a record of them has been kept, discloses that there is never a variation greater than 2 percent from the total of hot and cold in one year compared with another. If this is so, we think that someone should boldly declare it.

Chaste Diana

THE PASTOR of the Primitive Methodist Church in Philadelphia who has stated that she will oppose the erection in a Philadelphia park of St. Gaudens's Diana that used to grace the cupola of Madison Square Garden, gives us something to think about. She has said, after warming up on the subject of Diana's chilly attire: "Of course, to do the right thing we ought to go into the academy and the museum and clean them out, too. They are just as bad as the burlesque theatres for nude pictures. But if we can't do that, we can certainly do something to stop their putting such things around in the open, where even the children playing in the park have to see them." Of course nudity is a subject that has many sides, and we should be the last to deny to anyone, primitive or otherwise, the right to be extremely circumspect where a strong natural modesty is concerned, if they are consistently modest about their modesty.

ON THE other hand, we must confess a liking for the less worldly point of view of the historic Catholic attitude toward the matter. It has never per se persecuted the temple of the soul, or poor brother ass, the body. Its patronage of the exuberantly fleshly Renaissance masters when these portrayed aspects of the heroic and everlasting struggle for the triumph of the soul, is one instance of its attitude and another may be seen in the Vatican's considerate care for authentic treasures of pagan art. It is a temptation to construe the latter into a doctrinal consideration for pre-Christian innocence, that it revered Diana because for a primitive people she was a symbol of chastity; but this not only would not be the truth but also it would not be that largeness and universality which is the truth. The truth is, of course, that the creations of the Creator of All Things are not evil unless there is a deliberate intention of perverting them to evil. We doubt that St. Gaudens's Diana is a malefic medium or would be a seducer of nice children playing in the park.

SACKCLOTH AND SYCAMORE

IN A RECENT book, which we hope can be reviewed very soon in THE COMMONWEAL, President Glenn Frank offers prayer for a "new renaissance" which he envisages as a renewal that shall wrest "culture from the pedant and the poseur, redeem it from its dilettante implications, rid it of its drawing-room inanities, and make it a magisterial force in the affairs of the age." Almost simultaneously President Frederick B. Robinson, of City College, New York, was telling the assembled Goethe Society of America the following alleged verities about the great German bard: "How different he was from the present bungling advocates of freedom of expression, who not only have nothing to express but who insist on saying it in formless chatter offensive to taste, both literary and moral! What a reproach he is to versifiers with no trustworthy vocabulary nor sense of sound and rhythm, to painters who are color-blind and unaware of perspective, to bankers who know nothing about security but go wild over speculation, to producers of shoddy goods and to all bunglers, from men in high office to careless plumbers and slovenly clerks!"

Two brawny academic arms pummeling at the same nail with impressive unison, however little they might like to stand side by side over many other nails. Nor are they alone—the answering hammer chorus is marshaled, in the spirit of the ancient phrase, from the glittering Atlantic to the peaceful Pacific. America has always got a heap of fun out of sham-busting,

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which is one reason why the job was never thoroughly done. As a consequence the shams have now busted themselves, in a grandiose spontaneous explosion which leaves us all more than a trifle giddy and weak. Enough has been said about the shoddiness which flourishes among plumbers and statesmen. We shall have a look at the culture.

Some years ago, Professor Canby, joining forces with Cicero, announced to the educated, money-blest youth of his time that, after all, getting and spending would pall on them; that little by little they had been constituted the aristocracy of the United States; and that it was the fate of aristocracies to have to go in for something more lastingly exciting than automobiles and chorus girls. It is easy to punch holes in this pronunciamento from our present heights of wise experience. But at the time Professor Canby was talking like a canny, double-eyed pedagogue interested in a crusade for "higher things" and obliged, even as was Peter the Hermit, to unearth a chain of argument which would "put the idea across." In a measure his did. The number of well-endowed citizens who, after Harvard or Yale, could tell a Toulouse-Lautrec from a Vlaminck without undue hesitation, increased faster than the number of departments at Macy's; and here and there, inside the covers of special publications, the sage thinking of these citizens was chronicled in all its glory. After the war this stratum of our society was quite Henry-Jamesy: Chartres, Botticelli and the Riviera were deftly balanced passwords the possession of which was worth what a champion trotting-horse used to be to a cruder but juicier millionaire. Some years later T. S. Eliot, coming out for universal cactus and the king, set a relatively more ascetic tone, the most recent notable triumph of which is the discovery that Saint Thomas Aquinas is, aesthetically regarded, exceedingly up to date.

But, as we have said, something was wrong with the Canby diagnosis. That the life of the cultivated man is not leisure—that even contemplation must not be, in the final sense, a retirement from life—is a truth which Goethe expressed so well in a pithy quatrain that his centenary really could have a practical value. While the intelligentsia in America (and elsewhere) became more esoteric, remote and learned in both anthropology and prosody, the great masses went roaring ahead. They called the tabloids into being, sent sons and daughters off to college. And the college succumbed. From this point of view, President Robinson has possibly been a little hard on the bad poets. These are relatively harmless fellows, after all, who guzzle a cocktail when they conveniently can and issue neat books of verses which editors have rejected. One is even tempted to say that the current percentage of good poets to bad ones is larger than the ratio of good to bad anything-elses. It was the academic leader—thinker, litterateur, philosopher—who, consciously or involuntarily, lost his significance.

On the one hand, the colleges were forced to recognize the professional opportunities afforded by culture. Here were thousands upon thousands of bright young people who dreamed of shining as authors, artists, geniuses. And there were vast mechanisms for the dissemination of wisdom and wit—the press, the radio, the stage, the platform. How to make culture serve a practical purpose became, therefore, the true ambition of the liberal college, for all the effort made by Mr. Canby's protégés to burn with the hard, gem-like flame. Monsieur Demos was bowled over by the spiritual riches offered him; there was no passion in his being which hundreds did not rush to flatter, no muddled idea in his brain which savants in throngs did not urge him to meditate upon. Professor Durant tickled his vanity by persuading him that flirtations with Kant and Hegel were his for the asking; Mr. Chase displayed all the intricacies of revolutionary economics to his marveling gaze; Mr. Barton made him realize that religion is after all like the advertising business. And the endless, endless, endless array of clubs and organizations listened every pert little notion to death.

On the other hand, however, this restless traffic in the soul's goods forced the academic retreats to shutter themselves off from the world in a manner unprecedented. If the educated mind was to survive, it would have to seek a defense not, as of eld, against an untutored, bellicose society, but against the far more insidious hatred of a world which fixed a price-tag to every cultural good. Accordingly there began to emerge that bitter resentment of the upstart, of the glib literary acrobat, which is no doubt a fairly new thing in human history. Cultural orthodoxy entrenched itself not against the infidel but against the sophistic heretic. The lines are now drawn so unflinchingly that the intercourse between the scholar and the public, notable in Emerson's day and even later, has virtually ceased to exist. Mr. Mencken has noted with ribald glee that theologians are silent in the present crisis. But the authorities—scholars and seers—are likewise wordless. In both cases it is less a matter of having nothing to say, than of a sense that saying would be hopeless. The professor no longer even shakes his fist at glib ignorance on parade.

It follows from all this that Mr. Frank's renaissance is badly needed. But from what source it is to rise remains dubious. Possibly we are headed for a simpler world, in which gardens, flowers and children will be more important even to the literati than was latterly the case. Perhaps the machines will come to ruin and we shall have time for a few hand-made notions. Or it may be that the leavening of the masses will eventually produce a new loaf of solid bread. Only one thing is certain: after our pride, we have grown humbly aware of how ridiculously, impotently, sentimentally we wobble about in generalizations which have lost all glitter and in specializations without distinction. The time is right for a genuine heart-beat, for an idea which will seem more than just another shrill note in the aimless chatter of fools.

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PIUS XI

By JAMES HUGH RYAN

The tenth anniversary of the elevation of Pope Pius XI to the See of Peter is memorable both as offering a point of vantage from which to adjudge an eventful era in the history of the Church, and as a halting place, necessarily transitory, in the reign of a great Pontiff. Monsignor Ryan, who has kept in close personal touch with the Vatican, devotes the following paper to a consideration of the chief events and purposes of the decade. Here is no mere summary of incidents but an attempt to give an impression of the spirit which actuates the government of the Church.—The Editors.

TEN YEARS is a short time in the life of the Papacy; it is considerable in the life of a Pope, relatively few of whom have reigned for a longer period. Pius XI has completed ten years on the throne of Saint Peter and, while we are too close to him and to the accomplishments of his reign to pass a final historical judgment on them, one thing stands out in all clearness from even a cursory consideration of his activities—he will certainly take a place among the great Popes of all times. Piux XI is impressing himself more and more upon the changing character of the twentieth century; he is giving it direction, purpose and meaning to an extent no other world leader has succeeded in accomplishing; year by year his gigantic figure looms more imposing, his influence becomes deeper and profounder. Recently, he was nominated one of the ten outstanding men of the age. It would be more exact to place him among the first three. Should he live for another decade, and there is every prospect that he will, his place in history as the greatest man of the twentieth century is almost secure.

We must go back centuries to find a Pope who, at his election, was called upon to face world conditions as serious, as menacing and as hopeless as those Pius XI looked out upon, that February 6, 1922, when from the balcony of St. Peter's he gave his blessing *urbi et orbi*. The greatest war of all times had come to an end, but the world was still full of hatred, bitterness and discord, despite treaties and promises of friendship. Out of the war there had been born "a spirit of violence and of hatred which, because it has been indulged in for so long, has become almost second nature in many men." Society was "lapsing back slowly but surely into a state of barbarism." For a Pope, the earthly representative of the Prince of Peace, there was but one course of action to pursue. He must make peace the end object of all his thoughts and acts—not any kind of peace, not a "peace that will consist merely in acts of external or formal courtesy, but a peace which will penetrate the souls of men and which will unite, heal and reopen their hearts to that mutual affection which is born of brotherly love." And "the peace of Christ is the only peace answering this description." The masterly encyclical, "Ubi Arcano," gives the keynote to his reign; it is also a measuring rod by which we may test the success of his pontificate. How well he has followed, even in detail, the magnificent program given to the world in that important document, we, after ten years, are privileged to affirm.

He had been Pope but a few months when he began the practical work of translating the Christian principles of peace into concrete, every-day reality. Letters were written to Cardinal Gasparri, the then Secretary of State, on the International Conference of Genoa; the bishops of Italy were commanded to assist in the work of peace; a telegram was sent to Mustapha Kemal Pasha calling upon him to help maintain peace in the Near East; aid was sent to Russia; a memorandum was forwarded to the League of Nations on the condition of Christians in Palestine. Since then, year after year he has called upon the world to return to the ways of peace. At Christmas, 1930, he pronounced a truly marvelous discourse on peace; but a few months ago he issued his encyclical, "Nova Impendent," in which were laid down in the clearest and most intelligible terms the conditions out of which a lasting world peace must come. Pius XI, it is true, has not been invited to participate in any of the innumerable international conferences which have been and are being held. That is the world's loss. He continues, however, to raise his voice and he is heard by millions, both in and outside the Church. Today Pius XI is, as a leading French statesman remarked, "the greatest worker in the cause of peace."

The Pope is not a theoretical pacifist, a maker of fine phrases. He himself has led the way to peace in a domain closest and dearest to him, in Italy. Until the so-called Roman question was solved, the sceptic could point the finger of scorn at the fine phrases of a Pope who spoke for peace, but lived at war with his nearest neighbor. The incongruity of such a position was evident to no one more than to Pius XI. He labored day and night to come to terms with Italy. On February 11, 1929, just seven years after he became Pope, the Roman question was solved by the signing of the Lateran Treaty. "God was given back to Italy, Italy to God." Many will regard this as the greatest act of his pontificate, and perhaps it is. History, too, will probably stamp it as such. But, in my humble opinion, the truly significant thing for the world is not that Italy and the Pope have come to an agreement. It is that the Holy Father has shown that, given good-will and Christian principles, it is possible to solve any disagreement whatsoever between nations (few questions were bristling with more difficulties than the Roman question); that peace is not the dream of an impractical theorist; that if nations are honest, just and truthful, war can be banished. The "peace of Christ in the

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Kingdom of Christ" is a realizable ideal, if we are to conclude from recent events in Italy.

The major interest of every Pope is the spiritual life of the members of the Church. Pius XI has deepened and widened this to an incomparable degree. His work for the missions is little short of miraculous, a work directed by full knowledge of the conditions under which our missionaries labor and arising from a profound sympathy for the different peoples to whom they are devoting their lives. Some have begun to call him the "Pope of the Missions," and with reason, for one has to go back to the great missionary efforts of the sixteenth century to find anything comparable to the work of Pius XI. His encyclical, "Rerum Ecclesiae," marks a new era in the history of the missions; here again he is not a mere fashioner of words. Activity followed upon the enunciation of principles. The Society of the Propaganda Fidei is reorganized, a missionary exhibition is inaugurated, bishops taken from the native clergy are consecrated by the Pope himself to impress on the world the universality of the Church of Christ, new vicariates are established, seminaries for the native clergy are founded, and a tremendous impetus is given to every phase of missionary effort. Nowhere have the transforming effects of the Pope's leadership been felt more than in the United States. Portion after portion of the mission field has been taken over by American religious, men and women, the training of missionaries has been quickened, the laity has been fired with a consuming zeal for the conversion of the unbeliever, mission groups have sprung up all over the country. Even the school children have been enlisted in a mighty crusade to help bring the Faith to those who sit in darkness. If Pius XI had done nothing else than re-create in us the missionary spirit, we who are just emerging from the condition of a mission land, his name would be held forever in benediction by the Catholics of the United States.

As the years go on, Pius XI seems to grow and grow, both in knowledge and in power. With almost superhuman understanding he points out the sources of existing evil and indicates the remedies to be applied. He is thoroughly conversant with the currents of modern existence, familiar with the damaging effects they have had on the life of the nations, and eager to bring to their correction or destruction principles and lines of action making for the welfare of all. Education, marriage and social life are the three great fields in which today we wage war against the forces of secularism, neo-paganism, unbelief and Communism. The world of the future belongs to the force which triumphs in these battles. No great gift of prophecy is necessary to make such a prediction. Unless we can preserve the home, the school and society for Christ, all is lost. Pius XI has gone forth bravely to the battle. His most recent encyclicals, "On the Christian Education of Youth," "On Christian Marriage," "On Reconstructing the Social Order," lay down the principles we, as Christians, must adopt, clearly indicate the lasting things for which we must fight, and show us the way to victory. No one knows better than the Pope that the world has changed and is changing; he is not adverse to changing our tactics to meet the new conditions. When it comes, however, to principles, to the "deposit of the Faith" of which he is the divinely appointed guardian, on these there can be no compromise with the modern world. Economic systems come and go, political creeds live and die, educational processes are reformed and remade, but the truth of Christ is ever the same. We cannot divorce Christ from life no matter how manifold or varied its manifestations may be. To banish Him from the modern world, to erect an economic, political or social system on a foundation which is naturalistic or materialistic, is to end in disaster. Christ must be put back into the very texture of our daily existence, and it is to Catholic Action, "the participation of the laity in the true apostolate of the Church," that the Pope turns to effect such a result.

It would have been surprising if a Pope, the major portion of whose life has been devoted to the exacting tasks of productive scholarship, had not concerned himself with the intellectual needs of the Church. Pius XI has been true to his past. In the realm of the higher education of the clergy he has issued an important constitution, the results of which cannot but be the raising of the level of university training to the best modern standards. One other significant effect of this document will be to band together into an international unit the forces of Catholic higher education the world over, stimulating the scholars of each nation to friendly rivalry in the interests of science, and bringing together the products of the scholarship of each people to the defense and propagation of Christian truth. Moreover, in spite of the tremendous burdens of his exalted office, the Pope has never lost personal interest in the welfare of the Vatican Library, that treasure-house of historical knowledge. With American assistance, the Vatican Library has been reorganized and modernized. The Pope has added to its existing priceless collections 100,000 new books and over 10,000 manuscripts. He has made its archives and source material more easily available to scholars everywhere and has merited thereby the everlasting gratitude and affection of the learned world. The international card catalogue which is now being made and which will include the titles of all the great libraries of the world will, when finished, be of incalculable service, as well as a great saver of time and money, to students everywhere. Pius XI, in this work for science and scholarship, has followed the best traditions of the Papacy; he has, in fact, cut out for himself a secure place alongside of the great patrons of the arts and sciences who made the middle ages one of the most glorious periods in the history of human thought.

One side of the many-sided activities of this remarkable Pope which seems to have caught the imagination of the present-day world is his willingness to make use of the latest inventions of science in the work of the

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apostolic ministry. The Vatican Broadcasting Station appears to many a symbol of the mental alertness and freedom of a Pope who, though immersed in what some are pleased to call mediaeval ceremonial, is yet broad enough to recognize and to use the best in our modern scientific civilization. Personally, I do not think too much insistence should be placed on this aspect of the Holy Father's life. The utmost that we can deduce from it is that he is not unaware of what is going on around him; nor is he unwilling to use all good means to establish the Kingdom of Christ, and this we know already from his understanding of the world and its problems as presented in his truly remarkable encyclicals. Pius, too, is a builder, of churches, institutes, palaces, a railroad station, all buildings necessary to a complete, if tiny, state such as Vatican City is. But it is not of brick and mortar that the reputation of Pius XI has been built, and it is not for such that his name will go down in history.

This would be a strange life if all were joy and victory. Such is not the life of a Pope; such assuredly has not been the life of Pius XI. He has tasted joys but he has, likewise, experienced sorrows during the past ten years, and of the most tragic kind. The persecutions suffered by the Church in Russia and Mexico have rivaled in virulence and hatred the persecutions of the first three centuries. Recent events in Spain have shown that no church is safe, no matter how ancient or how glorious its history. Looking out on the world after ten years on the Throne of the Fisherman, the Pope beholds nation after nation where the Church under his leadership has advanced to new and greater triumphs; he also sees black spots where the enemy is in temporary command. But this has been the lot of Popes since the days of Saint Peter.

The outstanding characteristic of the Papacy in modern times, the attitude that most distinguishes it from present-day governments, is its serene calmness. No one can rush the Pope into hasty and unconsidered positions. Calmness of judgment, absence of bluster, the viewing of problems *sub specie aeternitatis* are traditional with the Vatican. Both as the heir to these secular traditions and in his own right as a scholar, Pius XI has approached all problems with a detached mind, uninfluenced by passion, ready to approve good where he sees it, to condemn wrong that requires condemnation. His large and reasoned attitude toward the great problems of the day has won for him the approval of the world. Pius, however, is no slave to tradition, nor does he exhibit a fear of change. Slow to arrive at conclusions, when once he has adopted a policy he holds on with the tenacity of grim death. Nor is he a respecter of persons, when principles are involved. It required bravery of heroic proportions to stand out against, in his own stronghold, the master of Italy. Yet the Pope withstood Mussolini on a question of the rights of the Church when the timid or overprudent would have counseled surrender or retreat.

Nowhere in the world has Pius XI impressed himself so deeply on the public mind as in the United States. Americans seem to understand and to appreciate the qualities of courage, straightforwardness and honesty so characteristic of the reigning Pontiff. Of all the modern Popes he is closest to our ideal of what a great leader should be. A product of the times, yet lacking the limitations of the modern mind, Christlike in his life, truly catholic in the sweep of his understandings and sympathies, he worthily occupies a throne made glorious by a Leo, a Gregory, a Peter. The title "great" is reserved for few in the course of history; incontestably it will be added one day by historians to the name of Pius XI.

A BYSTANDER IN GENEVA

By MAX JORDAN

I AM WRITING this on the day of the closing of the general discussion of the Disarmament Conference. There were three weeks of this discussion, sixteen meetings and forty-two speakers. Now the commissions will settle down to work. The different proposals submitted by the various speakers on behalf of their governments will be coördinated, tabulated and registered duly and properly. More meetings will be held and more speakers will be heard. Then there will be a protracted adjournment of the conference, probably from Easter until the middle of June. By September, the optimists say, the conference will come to an end. As far as the American delegation is concerned, the money appropriated by Congress would not last longer, anyway.

From the very start of this conference it was most amazing to observe how the pressure of public opinion was felt by the delegates. Only a few weeks ago the sceptics had insisted that the conference would not meet at all. When it had actually met, they kept on prognosticating its failure. All the while peace groups and women's unions and religious organizations had been pouring petitions upon the conference. Mass meetings were held day after day. In spite of themselves even the most reticent delegates could not help beginning to consider this business of disarming in a serious manner. Disarmament as an issue full of political reality consolidated itself visibly and swept the conference with real fervor. It became apparent that something had been started along a new road whose end could not yet be seen. Faith gained its place in the midst of mere diplomatic considerations.

Now that the first act of the conference is over, it can easily be seen that the idea of disarmament is im-

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planted in the public conscience and has become a political reality backed up by the inarticulate will of the masses. But it is also being realized that it is a long way to the formation of a unanimous public opinion with regard to the means by which to achieve the ultimate goal. Just as Chancellor Bruening of Germany said the other day, when he had to use the English word "unanimity" in a speech broadcast to America: he did not know exactly how to pronounce it, as in his country there never was such a thing as unanimity and the word was therefore rarely used! And this can just as well be applied to any other country in the world.

All the nations want disarmament. All their delegates in Geneva profess a sincere will for peace. But all seem to insist that disarmament and real peace must be brought about according to their own individual plans. Each and every one of the speakers in the assembly showed a marked predilection for "me and mine." Each and every one had his pet proposal, and the other fellow's idea would not do. Besides there is distrust of one another's motives. Every national delegation gives assurances of a sincere and loyal desire for international coöperation, but all draw a limit to that coöperation by insisting upon certain reservations dictated by national pride and intolerance.

Fundamentally, there is not one government willing to rely fully upon the principles of mutual trust and confidence which ought to guide human relations in an otherwise civilized society. Sentimental ladies were overwhelmed by the pleasant spectacle of an assembly of nations gathering in one large assembly for the frank purpose of disarming. But the assembly was patchwork. Behind the doors it was still *homo homini lupus*. "Fronts" were being established from the very first day. Hardly any of the delegations presented its statements to the conference without previous consultation of the particular bosom-friends. Tactics played a part in the very arrangement of the speakers' lists.

After all, there was no getting away from the fact that the diplomats and politicians tried their best to make it appear to the public as though some tangible results were being attempted, while in reality they were up to a game of hide-and-seek, dodging the real issue and failing in that essential sincerity which alone can guarantee success in any international dealings. Lofty sentiments of good-will were echoed in virtually all the speeches. But the practical conclusions were unsatisfactory throughout. Conceptions about the most essential prerequisites of peace differed noticeably. "Moral disarmament" meant recognition of the status quo in Europe to some, the sacrifice of sacred national obligations to others. "Security" signified the maintenance of a preponderant position of military power to one group of nations, but the recognition of a new *jus gentium* devoid of military sanctions to the other.

After three weeks the unconcerned observer must have thought that whenever one delegate spoke, all those not sharing his views were plugging their ears so they might not be contaminated by dissenting opinions. To be exact, this observation could correctly be applied only to the major powers of Europe, since thirty-odd speakers had not much to contribute in the way of new constructive ideas and the views of their governments do not weigh very heavily with those in whose hands the very destinies of the world now repose. But there remained difficulties and problems enough to make the task of the conference appear gigantic. All the complications which have arisen out of the late war were brought plainly into the limelight of a relentless international publicity. The whole misery of the European body politic, all its ailments, wounds and desperations, all its sins, shortcomings and failures, were laid open to the scrutiny of diplomatic surgeons, who are probably incompetent diagnosticians because their treatments have failed before and as yet they have not learned from previous mistakes.

While this orgy of disarmament talk was in full swing, the Sino-Japanese War went on its way. The meetings of the Council of the League of Nations brought the disarmament delegates back face to face with the gruesome realities of the Far Eastern situation. This simultaneous effort to stop a war actually in progress and to stop armaments for future wars was like a dark cloud hanging over the conference. It left even the most hopeful observers in a quandary. Most paradoxical of all was the Japanese delegate's plea for the abolition of bombing from the air, at the very moment when Japanese planes were razing the Woosung forts. Bravely the conference upheld its dignity, hoping against hope that the events around Shanghai might end in a stalemate of some kind so that the delegates would be justified in carrying on their academic exchange of views. It was difficult not to wax satirical with the council struggling over its prerogatives to stop a war and the conference trying to devise new sanctions against an aggressor nation!

However, the Far Eastern war will come to an end and the Disarmament Conference will go on. It is well to keep in mind that this is only its opening phase. The militaristic policies of all the nations of the world are based on age-old traditions. To supersede these and establish new ones, considerable time is required. It was a mistake to advertise this conference as an undertaking which by itself could succeed in changing the fundamental aspects of world diplomacy. Human prejudices are not easily abolished. Disarmament, like slavery, must not be tackled by methods of logic, but by a slow education of the human temperament. There will have to be many more disarmament conferences before real disarmament can be achieved. It means progress, at any rate, that this first one was allowed to meet and that it withstood the onslaught of sceptics and the sneers of pessimists with such youthful energy. But more is needed.

> The will to peace, to a just and true peace which is one of the Christian commandments, is the essential and primordial condition which every state must bring to this conference if we desire that the conference shall succeed.

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In these words Dr. Bruening of Germany indicated the very root of the armament evil. He was the first and so far—besides Dr. Benesh of Czechoslovakia and Dr. Motta of Switzerland—the only statesman who mentioned the name of God during the Disarmament Conference. Had it not been for Dr. Bruening and the Prague and Bern statesmen, no acknowledgment of the necessity of Divine help and blessing would have been heard at this largest gathering of world leaders ever assembled. No prayer was said at the opening of the conference. No thanksgiving was offered at the closing of its first period. God seemed to be absent from the assemblage. Men tried to rely on their own weakness.

Dr. Benesh did his diplomatic colleagues a real and great service when he quoted the following words of his great compatriot, the philosopher Jean Comenius, spoken to the Peace Congress of Breda:

> Therefore, you ambassadors of peace, if you are fully to deserve your name, bear in mind not only the plans of mankind, but also the plans of God; consider not only what your kings demand of you, but also what the King of Kings demands of you, and take as your goal not war, but peace; and therefore remember that your negotiations must be conducted in tranquillity, without anger, in frankness, without deceit, in openness of heart, without treachery. Then you will win the approval of your kings and your peoples, if peace, the glorious work of God, so prosper in your hands that henceforward the people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places.

Even more aptly was the problem of this conference circumscribed by a speaker from Poland in the course of a notable public meeting of the Geneva Catholics. Preparing for war to secure peace, he said, was an antiquated slogan indeed. But even the more recent formula, "If you want peace, prepare for peace," could not satisfy the Christian mind. Therefore, the speaker concluded, a more satisfactory and more profound answer ought to be given to this pertinent question. To his mind this answer was: "If you want peace, prepare the Kingdom of God."

There were other manifestations of the Christian conscience during the conference (even though not within it), which proves how the pressure emanating from public opinion and directed against the men in public life who are loath to draw a lesson from the horrors of the last war, is continuously gaining in strength. At Notre Dame Cathedral in Geneva, during High Mass, a Dominican coined the beautiful phrase that a real Christian is always disarmed, meaning by that that the Christian ought to be ever prepared for sacrifice.

The Dominican was right. How can there be peace without surrender? Still the nations cling to old notions of national pride and claim prerogatives for themselves which are denied to the individual. No legal covenant, no arbitration pact and no disarmament convention will ever secure peace if they are not concomitant with a new international morality based upon the recognition of Christian principles. A mistaken conception of national prestige prevents the governments from gaining this newer and freer outlook. Each nation sticks to what it conceives to be its rights, each insists on determining these rights according to its own standards of national morality and refuses to submit to the higher standards of Christian doctrine which would really provide the only practical code for the intercourse of all peoples of the world.

Again the experts have settled down to work, in the military, naval, political, economic and diplomatic fields. No expert of human morals has been called in. No bishop is taking part in the deliberations. The assistance of a Divine power is not deemed necessary. All the while the world is becoming more involved in a maze of conflicting material interests which constantly grows more desperate and more exasperating.

If the delegates to the Disarmament Conference were to follow the precept of Jean Comenius, "Bear in mind not only the plans of mankind, but also the plans of God," an immense power of unselfish love, true forbearance and an unlimited spirit of sacrifice would blossom forth into unending blessings to all humanity! Disarmament, then, would not be primarily a business of armies and navies, of soldiers and guns and poisonous gases, but the more vital and most serious business of using self-restraint, loving one's neighbors, without any national or racial distinction, trusting instead of distrusting, bearing patiently instead of recriminating, giving instead of taking. This disarmament of human passion would ensure the world-wide solidarity of the human race. If we are all real Christians, all will be disarmed.

Gratia Plena

Annunciation of Divine delight,
When in the windless evening came a voice
Heard only of those virgin ears, which said:
"Hail to thee full of grace and Mother of
The God That is to be, the Human God,
The Infinite and the Eternal God
Clad in a veil woven from woman's flesh!"—
Then the great voice was silent and she gave
Willing assent to the august decree,
And high up in the crystal air the wings
Of the invisible glory passed away
Into the sunsetting, and she could hear
Naught but the silence of the evening,
And see naught but a silver skein of swans.
Flying homeward over the long blue mere,
And also homeward she returned in strange
Bewilderment and rapture and amaze,
Knowing that He had done great things for her,
Who holds the leashes of the summer stars,
And puts a bridle upon Behemoth,
And sways the flux and reflux of the sea . . .

WILFRED CHILDE.

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MIDAS AND THE MICROPHONES

By MAURICE L. AHERN

THAT ol' davil cinema is sick, very sick; he is gasping and glassy-eyed, but not yet quite in his death throes. Many specialists of eminent degree and varied experience are in attendance. Countless diagnoses have been made and although, to date, practically all the symptoms have been correctly analyzed, the proper treatment of the case still defies formulation.

The illness of the movies is, in a sense, sudden although the mighty giant of the silver screen was not stricken down in the fullness of his power and glory. It is true he began to feel weak—as who did not?—in October, 1929, but thinking the trouble merely psychological nervousness, gave himself home treatment.

For more than a year it really seemed that the movies would be the one unscathed participant in the boom. They resisted longer than any other industry the continued enervating assaults of the depression. Theatre and film rental receipts actually reached their peak for all time in 1930, the year *after* the stock collapse. Analysts explained this phenomenon as proving that in times of stress men and women would forego anything except food to sustain their bodies, and entertainment to fortify their hearts. The cheaper the better in both cases, hence the record business of the cafeterias and the movie theatres two years ago.

It was a fool's paradise. The belated blow fell in 1931, and at this writing one of the major industries of the world is struggling to maintain its very existence, with no time to think of the glamor of the power it once wielded and the false security it had so firmly trusted. It did not fall alone. Before the crash it had yielded to the siren call of the prophets of big business and voluntarily relinquished the power of its isolation. Too late, in 1931, both Midas and the movies realized that they had circled their necks with the millstone of financial error.

Through two generations Wall Street had shunned the movies and all their silly works as Arabs avoid the unclean. In the beginning when Edison's peep-show was casually noticed in the papers, sober hard-headed financiers, if they lowered themselves to forecast at all, predicted the early demise of the new "toy." Notwithstanding this cynicism, of its own strength, and fostered by the capital and energy of hardy souls who were both gamblers and visionaries, the "toy" grew into a mighty world mechanism, the colossus of entertainment, so wide-flung and powerful that governments deemed it worthy of heavy taxation and politicians, sensing a vote-getting value, accused it of being the sinister propaganda of American trade.

The splendid isolation was not to last. Its vigor and potentialities were its downfall. In common with many other industries that had little attraction for Wall Street until the world went mad in its orgy from 1926 to 1929, the movies, revivified and tripled in value by the success of sound pictures, became too alluring a prey to be further ignored by the financial giants.

When Midas smiles, let mere man beware. The gods of gold promoted the cinema with a vengeance, and in consequence the movies, as the man in the street knows them, virtually are no more. Instead of youth and its promise they have now but premature age and its disillusionments. The peep-show has become a factory. With two important exceptions every major company is under direct control and operation of the banking community, and probably none are praying harder at this minute for the speedy recovery of the sick patient than those same bankers. The expanded and financed movies have proved no more enduringly prolific in profits to their foster parents than the investment trusts, pyramided holding companies, chain store organizations and top-heavy realty bond companies.

The reasons for this crisis are three: first, general falling off in theatre attendance; second, promiscuous buying of control of theatres and music and equipment companies; third, extravagant operation of production activities at the studios continued after the decline in theatre receipts had progressed to the point where it was well known and disturbing to everyone in the industry except those in the lotus land of Hollywood.

Improvement in the first condition cannot be forced by artificial means. While it is true pictures above the average in quality will always draw above the average in theatre receipts, no company has ever yet been able to make more than a few such pictures in a season. The trade is trying harder than ever to make good pictures to counteract the depression in business. In fact many critics have said that more good pictures were shown in 1931 than in any other year. Apparently the handicap of hoarding is too great even for quality. A further negative influence is the reduction in prices of admission to all theatres, even the cinemas. The tide of red ink will not be stayed. In these days of depression men won't buy anything, no matter what the price. There are also, undoubtedly, too many movie theatres and many should be permanently closed, but their rent goes on just the same. Until the public of the world feels that the corner has really been turned, until men and women are again carefree in their search for entertainment, no one can count on a rise in theatre receipts as the Moses which will lead the movies into the land of promise. By then they will either be stone dead and buried beneath a monument of fixed charges or cured by other means.

The second condition resolves itself in the last analysis into a question of assets so frozen that some of them are petrified. Especially is this true of theatre properties.

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As far back as 1926 the major producers came to the conclusion that the surest way to insure the continuation of the level of their film rentals was to own the outlets that determined those rentals; to wit, the picture theatres. It was a sound idea and its execution proceeded, at first, in an orderly and hard-headed manner. Paramount and Metro already had a large nucleus in the Publix and Loew chains.

Within a year, however, because of first the phenomenal success of sound pictures and secondly the hysteria that seized all men and things during the boom, the orderly progress became a mad scramble. It resolved itself solely into a question of more theatres at any price, not because they were needed but to outstrip the other fellow. The natural corollary to such a state of affairs was that a wide-open seller's market was established. Any old kind of theatre, no matter what its condition or encumbrances, was put on the market at fantastic figures and fought for at the asking price.

Had the false prosperity continued, it would have been impossible to operate such properties at a profit, even supposing they were jammed to capacity at every performance. That is the part of the frozen assets that can never be thawed; the inflated price over the true value. From the beginning it was never anything but an irretrievable loss.

The producing companies were long in realizing that, after the depression had become acute, their beloved theatre chains were shackles rather than ornaments. When they did, however, be it said to their credit that they took the obviously sound, but drastic, course of disposing of the theatres for the best available price and absorbing the loss immediately.

Unable to increase theatre receipts artificially, and having finally disposed of as much as possible of their dead-wood theatre properties, there remained but one place for retrenchment and that was within the ranks. In part this was fairly simple but from another angle it turned out to be a process so involved that it is still in progress, and whether it is being done properly will not be determined for at least another six months.

The operations of a major motion picture company are divided into two distinct parts, distribution or sales and production. The distribution branch carries fixed expenses such as salaries, rent, routine purchases, etc. The only way of retrenching there is by reducing personnel, salaries and purchases. This is simple but there are very definite limits beyond which such action cannot go. An efficient organization must be maintained if a company has any hopes higher than a receivership.

The production department, on the other hand, is one in which theoretically, at least, the possibilities of economy are enormous. Upon that rock the banking fraternity is stubbing its toes violently. This for the very simple reason that production is creative; it cannot be conducted like a factory or a department store. Its expenses vary with every picture. Those who constitute it are of the temperament which must be controlled by the iron hand in a silken glove. It functions well or ill according to the morale and unique talents of its members. One cannot just say to an artist, "You will only get half your salary from now on and if you don't like it you can get another job." Nine times out of ten the artist will tell you he prefers to look for the other job.

It is hard for a banker to understand that a Gaynor or a Garbo can be worth $250,000 each in salary a year, though that same banker can understand perfectly how Mr. Sloan of General Motors or Mr. Grace of Bethlehem Steel can be worth it. Yet Garbo and Gaynor each mean probably between $2,000,000 and $3,000,000 a year in sales to their respective companies; possibly a great deal more, and four times that amount to theatre owners. Stars and directors are worth what they can bring to the box-office. It is financial suicide to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs.

Now no one doubts for a fraction of a moment that there are boundless opportunities for economy at motion picture studios. Their operation is not as fantastically silly as it was twenty years ago, yet even now the duplication of effort, disproportionate salaries and snap-judgment expenditures are appalling. The problem of curtailing this waste has the bankers dizzy. They, ignorant of the first principles of picture making, are endeavoring to slash its cost to the bone. The results so far have been drastic reductions but at the same time an incalculable damage to morale, which a picture studio needs more than any other line of human endeavor.

The place for the bankers' lightning to strike is at the studio overhead; that huge cost made up of a thousand and one little extravagances, inflated payrolls, unnecessary delays which saddle every picture with a huge lump sum even before the cameras begin to grind. To quote a prominent trade editor:

"Top-heavy organization—set up in boom times of easy money—is blocking progress in the motion picture industry. Bankers and business men now involved in this whirlwind of cash business, where actual financial returns fluctuate to the tune of hundreds of thousands every week, are sadly—almost pathetically—handicapped. In other fields they can call in engineers and technical experts. They have standards of values to rest their decisions on. In this industry they have no standards of values. It is impossible to have them. Everything rests upon personal opinions and judgment. The business is back where it was before the stock-selling inflation gave it a top-heavy organization. It is back where all the income has to come through the box-office windows. It is back where decisive action by courageous executives is needed . . . every minute."

Show business may be organized to the hilt, but without morale and personal individual leadership it is but a white sepulchre. There are many clear, deep thinkers today who feel that the return of men like Fox, Zukor, Sheehan and Lasky to real power under careful financial supervision would be a real and the only true boon to the industry. The bankers have a tremendous opportunity to revivify or ruin. Will Midas guide the microphones by men or methods?

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BEHIND THE BALANCED BUDGET

By VIRGIL JORDAN[1]

SPEAKING in stock-market terms, and thereby reviving for a brief moment a language long dead and probably never to be resurrected, this economic mess into which we have wandered can better be described as a stupidity boom, a New Era of asininity, a panic of intelligence, than as a business depression or a financial crisis. Every cliché of classical economic theory has been capitalized into a holding company, of those who want to hold on or to hold off doing anything. Every bromide of banking policy has been converted into an insecurity affiliate in which seven-fold split-up shares of uncertainty have been disposed of to the surviving tribe of investment-trustful conservatives, who still believe that old-style capitalism can be succored, if there are enough suckers. Every slogan of Samuel Smiles about self-help, smiling through, and going slow on governmental action has been subjected to high-pressure salesmanship by scatter-brained and insincere statesmen, in spite of any blue-sky laws there may be about bunk.

Among the leaders in this bull market of imbecility, the greatest of all time, must be counted the monetary, credit and fiscal ideas, listed as idiocy preferred, in which the administration has taken a great deal of stock and on which, of course, the financial fraternity have always been as long as they were short on common sense. It would take too much space in this market-letter to examine the unstable balance sheet of these conceptual insecurities, to expose the imaginary and wasting assets behind them, to show how they have been watered by wave after wave of depression in the world's history, to point out their high price earnings ratio in terms of suffering and their excellent prospects for speedy receivership in the next ten years. Some day, a century or two hence, the story will be written by a wiser and less impatient commentator and read by a community more incredulous that such absurdities could ever have been possible. We are making, not writing, history; we are not concerned with a curious archaeological theory; we are dealing with a desperate condition which cries for action.

All that we need to recognize, and what is already clear to a considerable number of competent people, is that we and the world with us are suffering chiefly from a seriously defective, and recklessly uncontrolled credit system which has failed through ignorance or insanely selfish intent to provide a stable standard of value and an adequate supply of the monetary media of exchange necessary to keep consumption in pace with the increasing productive powers of modern industry. In consequence of the failure of money and credit in circulation in the channels of trade to expand in close step with the increase of trade after the middle of 1928, and of its acute contraction in the past year, prices of commodities, labor, capital goods and real estate of every kind have collapsed, the first to pre-war levels, the others rapidly approaching them. The burden of all debt, public and private, incurred at previous price levels has been increased in proportion to the fall of prices, and large portions of it have already had to be written off or defaulted. Most of the remainder will perforce be written down, along with the rate structure of utilities, the capital structure of railroads and the obligations of insurance companies, unless the commodity price level can be restored by returning to use the amount of currency or credit that has been destroyed through deflation, or unless the gold content of the currency is reduced in proportion to the decline of the price level. Since the consequences of such a collapse of prices or contraction of the monetary medium as has occurred reach into every aspect of a capitalistic system based on credit and debt, it is not inconceivable that they may wreck that system itself unless they are offset by suitable and speedy measures.

This situation is in essence the outcome of the unfortunate fact that the people of this country through Congress have granted a franchise to private interests to create and control the amount of money and credit provided for the convenience of the community and to levy a tax upon them for this service. Although under the constitution Congress was given the sole power "to coin money and regulate the value thereof," this power has not only been delegated to the private banking system, but Congress has permitted the public to be compelled to pay this system an almost arbitrary price to persuade it to exercise this power, however poorly and despotically it may do so.

Now that the banking system, at first unwilling, finally became unable to perform this function effectively enough to prevent paralysis of industry and trade, collapse of values, widespread loss and suffering and destitution, it was necessary, in successively more drastic stages, for the government to assume its powers, to use the public credit to support the private credit system and save railroads and banks from suspension. It has not yet seemed necessary for it actually to take over operation of the banking system to protect the public interest, as it did the railroads when they were unable to function during the war; but it has all but done so, and this may be the next step if the measures so far taken prove ineffective in forcing the banks to perform the functions which the public has delegated to them. All that these measures have attempted is to make possible a resumption of credit expansion and a restoration of monetary purchasing power in use. They cannot

[1] EDITOR'S NOTE: The opinions expressed by Dr. Jordan are his own. While interested in them, THE COMMONWEAL does not identify itself with them.

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compel the banking system to operate to this end, if it still believes that such expansion and consequent business recovery are not desirable or are premature, and holds to the delusion that it can collect $1.00 debts (now worth $1.50) out of $.50 incomes.

Whether, by good luck, it comes through regular banking channels or otherwise, a reinflation of credit and restoration of values nearly to the 1926 level is inevitable if we are to escape disaster. This can be done only by restoring purchasing power in use at that point in the system where it will be most promptly applied to purchase of commodities—that is, in the hands of the unemployed. It will be of no use to attempt to preserve the value of securities and capital investments against further depreciation— like the mummies which Herodotus tells us were taken by bankers as collateral by king's command during a financial crisis in Egypt— if the underlying basis of all capital values, the consuming power of the public, is not expanded. The Reconstruction Corporation and the Reserve banks may protect bond and stock prices in their financial refrigerators for a while, but no embalming process will preserve them from disagreeable decay unless the purchasing power in the hands of the country's consumers is speedily increased.

For this fundamental reason the fiscal policies of federal, state and local government are of paramount importance at the present, and the stupidities that prevail in respect of them are most depressing of all the imbecilities of the moment for those who are hopeful of recovery. The fiscal powers of government may be used as an effective force not only for stimulation of business activity during a depression period, but as the most efficient agency of stabilization at all times; but it is useless to expect them to be so employed so long as we repeat the prevalent parrot phrases about balanced budgets, and succumb to meaningless slogans about protecting the public credit.

Balancing the federal budget to avoid borrowing, and doing it mainly with consumption taxes, is only one aspect of the deflation being applied through our fiscal policies in direct opposition to other governmental efforts to promote expansion. State and local public expenditures are being blindly slashed in a sort of fiscal hysteria that is sweeping the country. Social services indispensable in a complex and matured industrial civilization, including even education and health work, are being recklessly curtailed. Communities are everywhere engaged in the suicidal effort to maintain their private standard of living by deflating the public standard of living and returning to the pioneer conception of government as consisting of a sheriff, a post-office and the extravagance of a little red schoolhouse.

This kind of economy is not only futile and foolish, it is in direct contradiction of the fundamental economic forces at work in every advanced industrial nation, especially during periods of depression. At such times the demand for public services does not decrease. We need more, not less, police and fire protection, more educational effort to conserve and develop the human and social assets of the community when more of its members are idle. At such times, too, more of its capital and credit is unused as private consumption of goods and services is curtailed. But at all times the problem that confronts every developed industrial community is to increase its collective consumption of social services which raise its standard of living, by converting an increasing proportion of its surplus capital into current consumer purchasing power.

This is essentially what happens when we pay taxes to federal, state and local governments, or when they borrow to pay expenses and make improvements in public facilities. The twelve billions of taxes collected and the still larger amount spent each year are not deducted from the national income and cast into the sea. They simply represent the sum shifted from individual to collective consumption. Every dollar is paid out to some citizen and appears again in the total purchasing power of the nation, though in different places. In so far as it is drawn from surplus purchasing power not spent for goods and services by individual citizens who cannot consume all they earn, but must invest most of it, its net effect is to expand the consumer market, increase concerns, prevent increase of productive capacity already excessive, and raise the community standard of living.

A period of depression is therefore the time for the public in its organized capacity not only to borrow but to spend; to divert idle capital and unused surplus purchasing power into the channels of consumption. When private business is paralyzed by lack of private consumer purchasing power, public business and collective consumption become of paramount importance. When private credit is crippled, it is imperative to utilize the public credit to the fullest extent, to avoid increased taxation altogether or at least avoid increasing the burden on consumers, and to use in advance part of the future productive power of the people to increase their current consumption. If the banking mechanism is unable or unwilling to mobilize the money and credit necessary to enable the public to utilize future purchasing power for present need, the community must and can use other means of accomplishing this end.

I do not deny the desirability or possibility of increased efficiency in public expenditures and of important improvements in our tax systems. These are too extensive and too technical questions to be discussed here. It is sufficient to assert that much that is being said on these subjects is an expression of sheer insincerity or ignorance, and some of it has a sinister purpose for which popular hysteria and distress is being exploited. Activities of government which are being attacked on the ground of extravagance are in almost every case of extreme insignificance in the total of government costs. All the civic functions of the federal government, for example, account for only 22 percent of its expenditures, the remainder being for past or future wars, and most of the regulatory bureaus upon

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which attack is especially centered account only for fractional percentages of what is spent; so that if they were abolished altogether, along with the President and all the executive departments, the saving would never balance any budget.

In any case, to talk of balancing budgets at the present time is sheer humbug, because it will not be done, and there is no intention of doing it. It is as impossible to raise tax revenues to meet expenditures in a period of profound depression as it is to do so during a period of war. No country has ever done it or can do it. The proposals being made to this end by the administration and in Congress, the estimates submitted which appear to promise a balanced budget without further borrowing in the fiscal year 1932-1933, or even later, are insincere and intended to deceive those affected by this sort of thing into a false sense of security or satisfaction founded on nothing whatever.

But the insincerity and deception is not the worst aspect of the matter. Political chicanery of the most contemptible kind is evident in the unblushing sponsorship of consumption taxes as a budget-balancing necessity by the Democrats, and the shrewd complacency of the Republican acceptance of it with a cynical shrug. The administration knew better than to put its head in that noose; it never dreamed of attempting to put over a sales tax measure by stampeding the public into a panic about the balanced budget. It was quite willing to let the Democrats acquire the kudos coming to them for budget balancing on that basis, and incidentally to show on which side their campaign bread was buttered. Astonishing it is how thin-skinned the enthusiasm among both parties for budget balancing became when an insurgent revolt threatened resort to higher income taxes as a substitute for the obnoxious sales tax. This episode of recent weeks has at least called the bluff of both parties on the budget-balancing bugaboo, and shown that both are tarred with the same stick so far as protecting the higher income brackets and passing the buck to the consumer are concerned.

Aside from this sickening exposure of the character of the two parties, which may return to harass them in the shape of a third party movement several years hence, it was an unnecessary and silly tactical error ever to have espoused the shibboleth of budget balancing in the first place. What is there in this phrase, or that of the public credit, that closes discussion and defies analysis? What is the imperative importance of balancing the budget by taxation in the present situation? Who is interested in doing it, and why? Is the economic emergency and social crisis this country now faces any less serious to its future than the military emergency of the war period, when we borrowed $20,000,000,000 without breathing a word about budget balancing or the public credit?

From the point of view of the public interest as a whole it is not only impossible to balance the budget otherwise than by borrowing, but it is perfectly proper, possible and necessary to sustain and increase public expenditure in excess of revenue by borrowing. We reduced the public debt in the period of prosperity much faster than was contemplated in the original contract, and the excess reduction itself can justifiably be drawn upon now to meet pressing necessity. It acted as a persistent deflationary force while it was being done, and should be made to serve as a source of compensatory inflation now that the deflation process has been carried to the extreme by other forces. In fact the use of enlarged government borrowing to finance deficits out of idle bank credit and reserve resources is the only effective force for reinflation that remains in the power of the public to apply, and its effectiveness is further enhanced by the fact that this form of inflation influences the price level directly at its source in the purchasing power of consumer, and in employment of idle labor.

The public credit cannot be injured by such borrowing, for it depends at bottom solely on the productivity, employment and purchasing power of the public, which is increased by governmental expenditures in excess of current tax income, and by the lightening of private debt burdens that results from inflation and the rise of the price level.

To talk of diverting capital, by increased public borrowing, from productive industry into unproductive public expenditure, in face of the notorious hoarding of capital by wealthy individuals and corporations and the hoarding of credit by banks, is not only sheer hypocrisy, but is the shallowest sort of economic reasoning. At no time, and surely not during depression, is any public expenditure which provides employment and puts surplus or unused purchasing power into consumers' pockets unproductive. So likewise it would seem inconceivable—at this late stage of experience, and after the spectacle presented by the brokers' loans figures of a few years ago—that anyone still supposes that the public credit, or any other kind, depends upon the cash "savings" of the people; or that all the banking system does when it extends credit to government or individuals is to mobilize the widows' mites, act as a custodian of the community's cash, and lend it cautiously to "needy" customers. This financial fantasy is not only funny, but it has become a bit vulgar.

The public credit is nothing but the productive power of the community, and it can be diminished or destroyed only by prolonged paralysis of production, trade, employment and purchasing power. Anything which revitalizes these, restores the taxable resources of the community. The people of this country have at present a surplus of goods for consumption, a surplus of natural resources and capital equipment for further production, a surplus of idle credit power unreleased or hoarded by our banking system sufficient to supply the requirements of a vastly increased prosperity if they were intelligently used. This is a surplus crisis, not a deficit depression, and to raise questions about the public credit in such a situation is a stupidity shameful in a free, intelligent and responsible people.

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The truth is that such questions are never really raised or thought of by the public. The only questions that are involved in the issue of budget balancing and the public credit are those raised by the private banking system, and those are merely questions of the price which it can compel the public to pay for the credit which that system supplies in terms of current purchasing power—that is, the price of the money or bank book credits which it alone is in a position to provide under the monopoly powers that have been granted it.

But even this possibility of extortion is no reason for the shameless attempts of politicians to stampede the public into panic about its credit. For one thing, if the price is put too high, it will react upon the banks themselves, depreciating the market value of the past credit they have supplied, and indirectly expropriating part of their capital assets. In any case, the Federal Reserve banks, which are at least semi-public institutions, have been given almost unlimited powers under the Glass-Steagall Act to expand the currency and credit of the member banks, by force if necessary, to support the government bond markets by absorbing bonds as a basis for currency and member bank reserves. To suppose that the public, through the banking system, would be unable to absorb four or five billions of new federal financing to balance the budget in the next two fiscal years without resorting to consumption taxes, is not only to fly in the face of the plain facts of the many-fold oversubscription of every short- or long-term Treasury issue offered in recent years at a reasonable rate, but is to suppose that the people of this country are without resources to resist the racketeering tactics of the financial system, and must submit helplessly and permanently to its dictation of their future progress and prosperity.

The real facts that we should face in considering this question are those that are likely to confront us if we persist in the stupid attempt to pretend to balance the budget by consumption taxes under the dictation of a banking system which has already forfeited the confidence of the common man. They are foreshadowed in the spontaneous insurgency in the House recently; in the riots in Detroit resulting from the closing of public libraries and recreation centers which supplied the unemployed with a means to pass the time advantageously; in the juvenile delinquency, malnutrition and disease which are accompanying the curtailment of public school, health and relief services in some communities.

The final outcome must be civic disorder and social disintegration, if we do not first resort to direct inflation of the currency to support increased public expenditures imperative in a period of unparalleled national distress which compels the community to invoke its ultimate powers of self-protection when its private institutions fail it. The American people are facing these facts, and phrases will not frighten them off from acting upon them.

CHILD PSYCHOLOGY

By KILIAN J. HENNRICH

IN RESPONSE to a questionnaire recently sent out by the University of Kansas to its married women graduates, the overwhelming opinion was expressed that, among other things, child psychology should be taught to the pupils of the public schools. It seems that these women were of the opinion that there already existed a reliable scientific child psychology and that it was of universal application. The saying so frequently repeated nowadays: "We know much more about children at present than we did thirty years ago," although true in many ways, cannot be extended to every phase and activity of childhood. We are well advanced in knowledge about things that pertain to the physical welfare of children, but as far as the soul, the mind and will are concerned much has been dreamed and much has been said and written but very little of it seems to be of real and permanent value.

Psychology denotes the science of the spiritual soul and its powers, the mind and the free will. Since no two persons are psychically the same, it is a science of the individual rather than a science of the masses. Some fairly general principles have been evolved as a basis for applied psychology, but further than that, the science has not made as much progress as one is led to believe. Psychology still presents tremendous difficulties. "Modern psychologists" are trying to solve them. But most of these psychologists draw their conclusions from visible signs and appearances, especially from character faults and habits. Some use the observation method, others questionnaires. Both methods have their shortcomings. Both are investigating abnormalities or sin, something negative and, according to Saint Paul, a mystery. To penetrate into the innermost recesses of the human soul for the purpose of obtaining enough reliable data to form a basis for sound principles and judgment is practically out of the question. Human nature is inclined to hide rather than to reveal what is not in its favor. Several attempts recently made to get at the truth by research have not improved the situation. What was discovered demonstrates clearly that conclusions applicable to a thousand were not applicable in general, and those true with some individuals were entirely wrong with others. Hence, the real source of psychological knowledge must lie outside the child. This may seem a paradox, but it nevertheless is true. The laboratory for child psychologists is not the soul of the child, but revelation, autobiographies of great men and women, especially the saints, and the experience of well-balanced adults.

Another difficulty is found in the psychologist himself. His views will necessarily be colored by his education, belief and training. A preconceived philosophy of life out of harmony with revelation will never judge the soul correctly nor conceive and understand it as it really is. True psychology presupposes as a *sine qua*

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non true religion. "Anima humana, naturaliter christiana." Hence, the variety of views and the different opinions and theories prevailing in the field of applied psychology.

Keeping this in mind one may ask: How far are we in the science of psychology? This question can best be answered by examining the literature about this and allied sciences. A large number of books has been written on this subject and others are following at a rate of several a week. There are but few Catholic authors among the writers but their number is increasing. Most of the books on child psychology now on the market have been written by behaviorists, naturalists and atheists. From a Catholic viewpoint none of their productions is acceptable, at least not without reservations. Even then, their usefulness to Catholics is very doubtful, since the errors upon which they are based are all fundamental. Among non-Catholic psychologists there are very few who believe in original sin and its consequences. There are, however, many who believe in an evolution of morals not yet completed instead of an eternal standard of right and wrong. Others deny the absolute freedom of the will and do not recognize in sin the abuse of grace. Again others deny the spirituality of the soul, divide it into parts and sections and make it completely subject to the body. Some go as far as to consider asceticism a disease of the mind. Evidently the best use that can be made of literature of this type is to learn from it not to fall into the same errors. A large number of these books are of the case-work type. Whatever good there may be in the study and evaluation of cases in other fields, the benefit is not evident in the field of psychology, especially if in the solution of cases and in their remedies all spiritual and supernatural means are entirely neglected. If there were no free will, things might be different. At present, not even the mind can control the will.

To conclude from the foregoing that Catholic child psychology is practically non-existent is going too far. As a systematic science it may not have developed greatly, but progress is being made and the number of sound and practical books is increasing slowly. However, the Catholic Church always had the correct principles and was eminently successful in their application, as the number of her illustrious children amply proves. In all our "modern" psychologies taken together there is not found as much true psychology as in a single sermon of Saint John Chrysostom or a treatise of Saint Augustine. Even the ancient pagans like Cicero and Plato rise sky-high above the platitudes of our modern materialistic university professors and doctors.

Having possessed for ages the psychology contained in the Scriptures, the works of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church and the lives of the saints, one may well ask why then are we still lacking a modern system of Catholic child psychology? In casuistry we are certainly not behind others. As to the rest, God has protected us against that by keeping the light of faith burning within us. Psychology is so closely connected with religion of some kind that it cannot be separated from it. The loss of revealed religion has driven many to look for all kinds of theories and schemes to brace the ethical man, and has often led them to substitute vagaries and mere personal opinions for the truth that came from God.

Another reason for slow procedure may be that the human psyche is individual. The individualization needed in the application of a general psychology is far more difficult than the application of general principles. This ought to make us proceed slowly even if we should be considered backward. Although we may not present so many novelties, we are certainly not without solid knowledge. What some consider and greatly admire as modern aids may not be so worthy of admiration if one takes into account the conflict of opinions of those supposed to be authorities in this field.

What then should be the Catholic's attitude toward the so-called "modern psychology"? It should be handled with care. In fact, it is so full of danger that its entire rejection would not be a serious loss. Its literature contains too much poison in comparison with the little good it offers. And what should be said about the "modern" psychologist and psychoanalyst? Can we submit our youth to their treatment? No, unless they are practical Catholics well grounded in religion. We should not be misled by a desire to coöperate with public authorities or to have a share in the facilities they provide. There are things in which coöperation and participation is not possible and among them is "modern" psychology and its application. In the hands of a good and conscientious Catholic psychologist, psychology may be a great force for good, but this gift cannot be accepted from the hands of those who are not such. The fact that they are physicians does not in itself qualify them to heal or guide souls.

What has been said applies more or less to all psychology. Child psychology is emphasized because the greatest harm is inflicted upon childhood.

The Warning

The little screech-owl sits polite
In the middle of the night
  And tells you gently, over, over,
  You are wisest under cover
Of your roof. Things rooted drink
More than walking things can think
  From the cup of night and take
  More pleasure than the sun can make.

You had best not be abroad
When a tree might seem a god
  Naked in vast company.
  There are things you best not see.
Better keep your eyes within
The little day a light can spin.
  Better in, the owl politely
  Warns and warns you, lightly, lightly.

ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN.

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THE CATHOLIC POETRY SOCIETY

By FREDERIC THOMPSON

AN EARNEST Catholic mainly interested in promoting the social and economic principles of "Quadragesimo Anno," when he was approached about lending his valuable organizing ability to the first public meeting of the Catholic Poetry Society, said, "By Jingo, it seems to me you are proposing to fiddle while the whole world is burning." This rather general impression in regard to the society, is perhaps best answered by the remarks of the society's chaplain and originator, Father Francis X. Talbot, S. J. He spoke of the men and women of his acquaintance who are doing so much to help the sick and the needy and who otherwise are participating with self-sacrificing generosity in the works without which faith is an empty form. The Catholic Poetry Society is for them, he urged, and not only for the tongueless nightingales who are pining heart-stifled in their dells. If it is to achieve any large purpose, it is to be for the many who, school and college days over, find no organized facilities for the enjoyment and the refreshment of the high cultural things which have their roots in the faith and their flowers in the sunlight of God's infinite love. The labors and the endurances of charity are in no wise to be neglected, because young people and men and women meet to consider beauty, to consider where it is found and its proportions, to dare to discuss these things both in the halting speech of prose and in the measures and distillation and figures of verse. So much for the essential right of such a society to existence.

Whether it can exist and grow, I personally believe will depend on whether it can escape a dangerous Scylla on the one hand and a formidable Charibdis on the other; in short, whether it can escape in its corporate parts on the one hand, dullness, and on the other, being ridiculous. These are no hollow bogeys, I believe. I have seen a small group of young men consorting in the name of poesy, and the burden of their words when they broke silence was so obscure and tenuous, that the scene presented the appearance of a special cell in inferno where some horrible stupor had descended on the listeners and the speaker was destined to be speaking in a bottomless void. And I have seen a versifier get up in such a gathering determined that the last stages of living death should not settle in the room, and resort to the galvinizing effect of lewdness and blasphemy and the extremes of the irrational. The consequences of this were worse than the first. Passive ennui gave place to revulsions that would have been adequately expressed by groanings and gnashings and the plucking of hair. Perhaps this may seem an indulgence in hyperbole, but if it is, memory plays me false.

Needless to say, let it hastily be added, the scenes described were not of Catholic groups, but of those in the last, sad stages of protest, of scepticism that had become involuted and had infinite reasons to be sceptical of the processes of scepticism, and of that unlovely neo-paganism that wheels in circles above the ancient carcass of a carnal elysium. Happily these extremities do not confront those who have faith in an endlessly creative Deity, rather than in a clockwork and meaningless cosmos or in little anthropomorphic gods; and who have hope in a beneficent and merciful Saviour Who identified for the mind of man not only the most exalted way of life but also forgave Magdalen and the penitent thief; and who know charity not as a theory or a special privilege of the philanthropist, but as the natural air of every-day. Catholics certainly, if anyone, have whereof to sing in our world. A danger that confronts them, however, is that they might conceive of their opportunity too solemnly. Of course a noble and beautiful seriousness is much more to be desired than that flippancy or nervous humor that persists tiresomely. Nevertheless, it would seem well to reflect that fast upon charity follow joy and peace as fruits of the Holy Ghost, and the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity I believe in all reverence should particularly bestow blessings on true Catholic poetry and the memorialization of it. Dullness at meetings of the society will be well avoided if the conventual spirit of cheerfulness is cultivated, and the ridiculousness of poetic flights that are, in the language of aviation, flat spins will be neither embarrassing nor occasions of serious hurt in such an atmosphere. So much for perils, and by the braving of peril, some suggestion of the broad savannahs beyond.

In regard to particulars, the society was conceived more than a year ago. A small executive committee met monthly, wrote and received many letters and spoke with many persons. A willing membership began to grow slowly but naturally. An Academy of thirty-three distinguished Catholic poets and writers was formed. This Academy is self-perpetuating. The basic sinew of the society, however, will depend on the formation and liveliness of local units of the general membership. In schools and colleges and cities where the amenities of social gatherings may be cultivated with an ease that is part of their essential condition of existence, local groups of the Poetry Society will meet as they list and disport themselves as they may. They will have their own executive chairmen, vice-chairmen, secretaries and treasurers, as they see fit. As members of the National Society, they will receive the quarterly bulletin, keeping them in touch with what is going on in other places, with publications by members and with other relevant matters. The executive committee of the National Society, at 329 West 108th Street, New York City, with a file of the total membership, will be a clearing-house for inquiries, and when requested, for intergroup communications. The publication of a magazine devoted to poetry at present seems a remote prospect because of the expense that it would involve, but the idea has many ardent supporters. The Academy members, having as it were "arrived," may be models to the general members and sources of enjoyment and inspiration through their writings; and they may also, as they are in residence all over the country, take an active part in the meetings of local groups. In its first president the society has a distinguished poet, the Reverend Charles L. O'Donnell, C. S. C., president of Notre Dame University. At Georgetown University, Theodore Maynard, a vice-president of the society, has instituted a Gerard Manley Hopkins branch which meets monthly with a speaker from the world of letters and has readings and discussions by its own members. Numerous other groups are about to be announced in the bulletin of the society. In a period when there is much complaint that commerce with beauty is too rarely sought, here would seem to be a company of pilgrims "with devout courage."

The Mother of Christ

(A Statue)

This *is* Christ's Mother. No one can doubt that.
The tall, tense figure. The ascetic face.
No dreamy maiden, but a woman, poised,
Who has looked life down. . . . Not far from the cross
in time;
And might be after or before—who knows?
Courage has warmed the stone, and tenderness
Has melted to soft curves the hard life-lines
In the opened hands, hands from which grace *must* flow.

WENDELL PHILLIPS STAFFORD.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

The Season in Review

EUGENE O'NEILL continues to hold the preëminent place among American dramatists, although his tenure is rather through default of other playwrights than through any extraordinary merit of his own. One cannot say that the season which began last August has been a genuine disappointment. It never did promise very much. The stress and strain of the surrounding world were not of the kind to stimulate the highest creative artistry. The fruit of our present pain will come later. But in a very special and immediate sense, every season which fails to produce a serious competitor for O'Neill is a disappointment, a measure of time lost, a contribution to that doubt, which assails us at odd moments, of the essential maturity of the American mind.

I have no deep-rooted desire to belittle O'Neill. No other dramatist in the English language can throw into a play more torrential feeling nor an equal instinct for sheer dramatic power. He is of the innermost fiber of the theatre. Just as Caruso, with his phenomenal voice, could violate many of the most sacred rules of singing teachers with utter impunity, so we find O'Neill repeatedly and successfully violating academic rules of the modern theatre. He can use some of the most shop-worn tricks of the theatre—as in the opening scenes of "Mourning Becomes Electra"—and make them as interesting and absorbing as the most carefully wrought novelties of the super-technicians. The "butler and maid" exposition of a play was supposed to have been discarded a decade or two ago, yet O'Neill calmly goes ahead and introduces us to the strange background of the Mannon family by having an old retainer take some sightseers through the Mannon property. It is all of a piece with his utter contempt for both conventions and counter-conventions, and to that extent part of his strength. He will use what he feels to be good theatre, regardless of the critical wasps. He is far too intent on his emotional purpose to be bothered by trivial obstacles. He drives forward to a given end with unchained intensity. Moreover, there is a rare integrity of a kind in all of his work, even in that which is marred by such artificial experiments as the asides in "Strange Interlude" or the masks in "Great God Brown." His integrity lies in being true to his emotional instincts of the moment.

But these qualities, which O'Neill possesses in superlative degree, are not, in themselves, an expression of maturity. A tornado has a certain inner integrity. It is, so to speak, true to itself. It does not masquerade as a spring zephyr. But it utterly lacks harmony with the rest of nature. It lacks the steady discipline which makes the trade winds great driving forces of the seas. The tornado is also exciting. But it brings nothing with it and leaves nothing behind except the terror of its own inner nature. Its touch brings no enlargement of the creative forces of nature. And that, as I see it, is too often the inner character of O'Neill's emotional outpourings. It is the intensity of his feelings, but certainly not their mature discipline, that makes him a great and true dramatist. The next great period in American drama will come when we have a playwright who can harness the feelings of an O'Neill with a disciplined maturity and convert them into the resplendent force of directed power.

This season has produced no such playwright. Potentially, Dan Totheroh could be just such an artist and so could Paul Green. But each of them gave us a play this year which fell far short of our well-founded hopes. Totheroh's "Distant Drums" caught with splendid simplicity the atmosphere and some of the terror of the covered wagon days on the Oregon trail. But instead of making it simply a story of man against the wilderness, Mr. Totheroh let himself be persuaded into writing another dominant and conflicting story about a character assigned to Pauline Lord. The two stories tended to neutralize each other, and to prevent either theme from gathering complete hold of the audience. Paul Green's "The House of Connelly" suffered, in a somewhat different sense, from scattered treatment. The theme of fine old blood that has grown so thin that it needs a new stream to give it vitality was well handled only at times and in certain scenes. It suffered from too many incidental illustrations and too many side episodes, and also from a lack of solidly theatrical treatment. There was absent from this play that burning indignation and pity which made Green's earlier stories of the "black belt" memorable. Yet both Green and Totheroh have the makings of eminent playwrights whose names could spread honor for the American theatre far beyond national boundaries.

The other promising writers have given us little to boast about. Elmer Rice has failed to write a comparable sequel to "Street Scene." George Kelly has been unproductive of anything faintly approaching "The Show-Off." Sidney Howard has contributed nothing at all. Lynn Riggs has not followed up "Green Grow the Lilacs," and there is no successor to Marc Connelly's "Green Pastures." The Theatre Guild has run thin of any native American material. Possibly the outstanding event of the year, aside from serious drama or important comedy, has been "Of Thee I Sing," in which, true to form, the distressful times have produced a brand of fresh and hearty satire to an incomparable Gershwin musical score. There might be objection in some quarters to not including Philip Barry's "Animal Kingdom" among the bright spots of a pedestrian season. But I cannot see that deft comedy lines and superlative acting contribute anything new, especially when a play has artificially twisted situations which destroy its human values and make its hero fundamentally either a cad or a very stupid and unheroic person. I would not exchange Barry's "Hotel Universe" for a dozen "Animal Kingdoms."

All of which leads back to the thought I expressed at the outset, that the mood of the world has not been of the kind to produce a new growth in artistry. This could easily be challenged on the ground that suffering, and, even more, a sense of peril, frequently bring out the very best and most sensitive qualities in the artist. But we must remember that the artist is usually a highly individual person. It is his own peril or pain, rather than a mass feeling, that stimulates him most keenly. When his own feelings sink into that of the mass, he is subject to the same temporary paralysis which grips all large groups at the actual moment of crisis. It is only later that the artist can develop his personal reactions to a mass event, to the end that the great war plays, for example, appeared years after the armistice. In spite of the Group Theatre's impressive production of "1931—," it remains true that the great plays to be generated by the present world crisis, with all its vast social ramifications, will probably not appear until some sort of readjustment has been worked out. Then, and then only, the artists will have the chance to isolate their own reactions from the mass, and to pour out, as an individual expression, some of the agony and terror which has gripped the world in recent months. In fact, one of the first true signs that the world has begun to emerge from the valley will probably be the fact that some foremost artist is again able to speak as an individual. That will herald the end of the mass torture.

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COMMUNICATIONS

CAUSES OF EXISTING DEPRESSION

Boston, Mass.

TO the Editor: Setting aside political and economic foreign complications and the disastrous decline in commodity prices, big business, high finance and almost universal wild speculation, all of which ran riot in 1921-1929 inclusive, are generally conceded to have been responsible for the crash of the latter year and for the resulting deplorable conditions.

The signs of social discontent and of political unrest which have been manifest the past two years, in practically all cases have had an economic basis. That basis is the failure of the capitalistic system not only to provide against recurring periods of deceptive prosperity and extreme depression, but to protect the masses from the enormous displacement of manpower in industry, resulting from the introduction of high-speed, mass-production machinery and the ever-increasing application of science and invention.

The consequent overproduction has led to ruinous prices—far below cost—of every product of soil and mine all over the world, and has correspondingly reduced employment and paralyzed the purchasing power of all engaged in those industries and their dependents. To these may be added many other contributing causes, among them the development of enormous manufacturing and distributing corporations, the latter exercising the profit-destructive power of concentrated, volume buying; high-pressure selling methods, whereby "desires" were proclaimed to be "necessities," thrift and provision for the inevitable "rainy day" declared to be both unwise and unwarranted, a philosophy of practically perpetual prosperity being proclaimed by men high in authority.

This abandonment of reasonable prudence was largely encouraged by the banking interests in freely furnishing ample funds to all classes of borrowers. They also encouraged overbuilding of industrial plants, commercial buildings, etc., mergers, consolidations, unwarranted and injudicious increase of capital structures, based on refunding upon a low return basis the extraordinary profits of abnormal years. In many of these they participated in promotions and underwritings. The securities thus underwritten were, in due course, allotted to smaller corresponding banks throughout the country, thus loading them wth frozen assets, most of which could only be marketed at severe losses, some not at all. Hosts of wage-earners were lured into incurring debts, the payment of which depended solely upon maintenance of the then current, uncertain, family income.

The victims of these circumstances noted:

The steady increase of vast aggregations of capital, many of them affiliated.

Splitting up of stocks two, three, or more shares for one; the distribution of stock dividends, and the increase of total dividend payments on such multiplications.

The extensive development of holding companies upon an enormous scale; the control—secured usually at exorbitant prices—of great numbers of public utilities by these holding companies, and the floating of stock to the public largely in excess of even these unwarranted prices.

The consequent charge of excessive rates to the consumer, based upon earnings providing attractive dividends upon these fictitious valuations.

The recapitalization of such companies upon a gigantic scale, based upon phenomenal and entirely abnormal earnings, figured down to a 5 percent, 6 percent or even lower, basis. The resulting multiplication of shares has been an important factor in the collapse of stock market values.

The unequal distribution of the abnormal profits of the several years preceding the crash of 1929, these earnings

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resulting from either unwarrantably higher prices than should have been charged the consumer, or lower wages than should have been paid the workers.

The failure to allot a liberal share of these earnings to reserves for the inevitable reaction, with its consequent disastrous unemployment.

The steady, forced appreciation in market value of these depreciated shares based on assumed future prospects, and the effort to earn and pay increasing dividends thereon.

The age "dead-line" whereby great numbers, at what should be their most productive period, are virtually excluded from employment.

The piling up of great wealth by professional speculators, non-producers, and their ostentatious parade of extravagance in the face of contemporaneous misery.

Well-nigh universal speculation, pervading every element of society, young and old.

The unwillingness of the authorities of the principal stock and commodity exchanges to curb pool operations, frequently amounting in single transactions to 10,000, 50,000 and even 100,000 shares, as well as the abuse of selling "short" with its inevitable effect of demoralizing values and accentuating prevailing depression.

The too frequent defalcation of trusted fiduciary officials —executive and subordinate—almost invariably traceable to speculation in stock or commodity markets; these defalcations sometimes running into hundreds of thousands and even millions before being detected.

The enormous gambling in grain, foodstuffs, and other staple commodities, daily transactions in wheat in Chicago alone running as high as 75,000,000 to 100,000,000 bushels in a single session; in one session running over 150,000,000 bushels. The equivalent of the entire wheat crop of the United States being sold in that one market in different years from fifteen to twenty-seven times, whereas government records over an extended period show hedging constituted only 5 percent of the total transactions in wheat in that market, 95 percent being purely speculative.

It is obvious that such conditions as now exist cannot long continue without political and social disturbances of the most serious character. Unless some drastic change is made in policies which have permitted the excesses mentioned, any marked improvement in existing conditions would have no assurance of permanency. Many men of good judgment predict it would be relatively short-lived, and would be followed by an even more serious situation than that which now confronts us.

The trouble goes deeper than what appears to be fundamental; it threatens the foundations of the capitalistic system, because of its abuses. These latter should preferably be abolished by voluntary, concerted action of industrial and financial leaders rather than by legal process. But since organized business has neglected to take a single constructive step to remedy conditions, it is apparent that reforms will be effected only through wise and thoughtful action by the government itself.

There is, likewise, increasing dissatisfaction regarding the operation of parliamentary government, and complaint is heard of the tardiness of congressional response to public sentiment, the employment of dilatory tactics to frustrate action on vital questions, and the—perhaps unjustifiable—impression of subserviency to corporate and financial influence.

That essential correctives should be formulated, adopted and put forward for general adoption, by a group of the recognized leaders of industry, finance, labor, economics and the public is highly important. This group should devote itself unremittingly and continuously until it can recommend such changes as would tend to weaken Communistic propaganda and discourage Communistic action.

The following suggestions for legislation affecting our international relations and for modification of our present economic structure are by no means complete. These latter are offered for open-minded consideration from the viewpoint of the public welfare rather than that of special interest or privilege. They are entirely non-partizan and purposely omit such questions as tariff, foreign debts, etc.

First in order would be world peace. Acceptance by the United States Senate of the protocols now before it is of the highest importance. This would constitute membership of the United States in the World Court which would no doubt be the strongest possible support to the Kellogg-Briand Pact for the settlement of international disputes. Disarmament naturally follows upon the foregoing.

Elimination of unfair and dishonorable competition through modification of the Sherman and Clayton Acts.

Restraint of excessive profits by publicly owned corporations as disclosed through analysis of income tax returns.

Deflation of corporate capital structure excessively inflated through stock dividends, splitting of shares, etc., reversing the unjustifiable practices of the preceding decade.

Holding companies to be under jurisdiction of the Interstate Commerce Commission. Rearrangement of capital structure of publicly owned and traded corporations by capitalizing abnormal earnings upon a low return basis, splitting of shares, etc., to be subject to approval by federal or state authorities.

Limitation of dividends upon corporate capital employed in public utility corporations vested with monopolistic privileges, to money actually paid in, plus reasonable additions to surplus; charges to be as low as provision for unemployment and pension reserves and equitable return to stockholders will permit, such reserves to be an operating expense, free of taxation.

Same general rules to apply to all companies whose securities are regularly listed upon stock or commodity markets, and whose securities are held by the public. Similar unemployment and pension reserves to be established by all employers of twenty or more persons.

Elimination of all trading on margins in stock exchanges and commodity market "futures," and between brokers and their customers; all transactions to be for cash, necessary accommodation, whether for speculation or investment, being secured from banks; speculative selling "short" in stock or commodity markets to be prohibited. This not to interfere with legitimate hedging. Lending to "short" sellers stocks bought and held for customers' account to be prohibited. Trading for their own account by houses soliciting or accepting orders from the public, generally, to be prohibited.

Suppression of speculative pools and trading in blocks of shares so large as to afford prima-facie evidence of not being the result of legitimate supply and demand.

National and state banks to be restricted to their primary function of loaning, investing and safeguarding deposits, and to be barred from participation in promotions and underwritings. Trust companies to be similarly restricted as to promotions and underwritings.

Preservation of equal individual opportunity with freedom to determine occupation unrestricted by either government or group dictation.

Abolish the "dead line"—forty or thereabouts—in hiring and firing employees.

Work to be "staggered" in time of slack business according to necessities of each individual case. Should reduction of number of days or hours of daily employment be determined, wage or salary to be the proportional part of six-day eight-hour scale.

No dole system. Payment to be made only for work done, except in case of physical incapacity.

We are now confronted with problems of the greatest gravity. They must be faced and solved if the existing political, economic and social system of these United States is to be preserved. Let us not deceive ourselves. The situation demands prompt, genuinely remedial, action. Government, as we prize it, will not survive a recurrence.

BERNARD J. ROTHWELL.

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BOOKS

Synthesis

The Bow in the Clouds, by E. I. Watkin. Essays in Order: 4. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.75.

AS A RULE when the present reviewer happens upon a book with a subtitle like the one on the jacket of this little volume, "An Essay towards the Integration of Experience," he is promptly prejudiced by the fact that much is written about integration by people who have no conception of integrity and about experience by those who have little appreciation of experience. But some writers do really use words to convey their meaning.

Saint Thomas Aquinas was one of those people who have a proper reverence for words. He tells us that integrity is a word which expresses the perfection of the reality to which it is applied. And now Mr. Watkin describes in his Foreword the purpose of the present essay toward the integration of experience, in the following language: "Its scope is to contemplate the order of experience from various points of view and different levels in the hope that the view from one point may supplement and illuminate the view from another, until the reader catches a glimpse of the mountain of being as it rises from the impenetrable darkness of matter to the impenetrable light of God." The perfection of experience is thus found only in the order of being, and an author who aims to integrate experience in being is indeed writing an "Essay in Order."

The treatment of the subject in this book is lyrical in form and spirit. In it are "set down under the imaginative symbolism of the spectrum—the colors of God's bow in the clouds—objective contacts at various levels." But we have not here the lyricism of an irresponsible romantic but a lyricism which sings in the accents of Job. For if "the morning stars praised Me together and all the sons of God made a joyful melody," why should not the bow in the clouds refract the pure white light of the Divine Sun and be to man a promise and a pledge that from the ultra-violet of matter he may rise to the infra-red of mysticism? Science, history, metaphysics, life, sex and religion are the seven spectral levels through which the author leads his reader upward on the ladder of experience until he reaches the topmost rung, and never during the ascent does he let him forget that God is in every step he makes.

Mr. Watkin has made a successful excursion into symbolic thought and literature. He makes no pretension to elaborate scientific or philosophical concepts, but uses "a rainbow as Saint Bridget is related to have employed a sunbeam," as a clothes-line upon which to hang his thoughts.

Saint Thomas may have given him his clarity of thought and his precision of expression. But mediaeval influences in our day are not exclusively Thomistic. The celebrated Victorines would readily recognize their kinship with the author of this book.

GERALD B. PHELAN.

La Salle

The Fatal River, by Frances Gaither. New York: Henry Holt and Company. $3.00.

CERTAINLY those difficulties of ignorance which hampered and often baffled early American explorers are not better illustrated than in the exploits of La Salle. His "fatal river" was the Mississippi. Sheer tenacity of purpose, inspired by visions of an interior French empire, sent him from Montreal around the circuit of the Great Lakes, up the Chicago and

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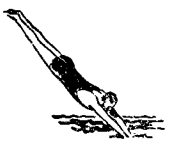

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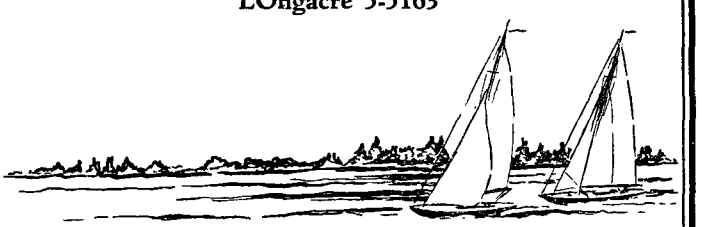

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Editor of "The Commonweal"
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WHITTLESEY HOUSE, 330 W. 42nd St., New York

down the Illinois to that great estuary and thence to the Gulf of Mexico. Navigation was not then a science and, because of inaccuracy, he overshot the deltas and landed in Texas. This was the climax of a career beset by misfortunes. The tragedy of his settlement there culminated in his brutal murder.

Mrs. Gaither, in her careful and sympathetic study of a man who was in large measure an enigma even to his friends, contents herself with a detailed description of facts and personalities and then allows them to tell their story. Her La Salle emerges as an uncommunicative, intrepid figure whose daring frequently disregarded those possibilities of precaution which one more prudent would have first considered. Difficulties were in La Salle's philosophy solely to be endured. Material ones his bravery overcame, but the incompetence, faithlessness, even treachery of men on whom he too often relied brought many of his best efforts to failure. He was not equipped by character, however brilliantly he handled the Indians and his more devoted followers, to deal with the subtle Frenchmen of his time. The miserable episode with the intransigent Captain Beaujeu is illustrative of this lack in La Salle.

In authentically establishing La Salle's connection with the Society of Jesus, through the unearthing of several letters to him from the Superior General in Rome, Mrs. Gaither makes a distinct contribution to history. The point is important in that La Salle throughout his life suspected the Jesuits and attributed many of his disasters to their disaffection over his remission of his vows. Mrs. Gaither demonstrates that, whatever may have been the order's desire to balk French colonization schemes in the Great Lakes and Mississippi regions, there was no such personal enmity as La Salle was convinced existed.

This inclusion of new material is an index to the scholarship with which the author has approached her material. Once collected, she has set it forth in an objective yet colorful style which matches the robustiousness of its hero. La Salle does not become alive for the reader, but this is La Salle's fault not the author's. Other characters lend themselves more facilely, and these and their period take on a vivid reality.

JOHN GILLAND BRUNINI.

The Beau as Poet

Harmonium, by Wallace Stevens. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

AS A GROUP, the Imagists are no longer recognizable; of Imagism as a theory of poetics, as a movement, little remains essentially as it was except in the work of Wallace Stevens. Amy Lowell, John Gould Fletcher, Pound—even H. D. whose singleness of purpose seemed long to have outlasted that of most of the other Imagists—fell into other ways. Stevens alone has prevailed.

Mr. Stevens's poems are objective, they deal of objects. Objects are secure, certain, unchanging; their significance is revealed, yet not revealed. The day goes over, the night goes over, and of these they do and do not partake, and for this: that a shell is a shell, to be described as shell, compared with shell and not-shell for all the sea, the sea's roar or the striped rag-rug beneath it on the parlor floor. A very Proust of poets, in such pieces as the more recent "Sea Surface Full of Clouds," Stevens is to be discovered examining, arranging, retreating from, comparing, rearranging, retouching, recomparing things —fastidious, elegant, the "beau with a muff," finding in the world of things something akin to security, one fancies.

His world is the *beau monde,* his character the dandy's, with a distinct, a personal and yet a typical taste for the exotic.

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The exoticism of New England (his milieu, one understands, is Connecticut) had more to do with transported teas and crockery than with the Orient, its lights and waters and its trees, or with the jungle and "the tuft of jungle feathers." His jungle is a garden. It exists in his imagination sensuously to be perceived: the flower, the leaf, the plumage of its birds. His jungle does not excite in him the primitiveness of Vachel Lindsay, with his drums. Stevens is nothing if he is not civilized, cosmopolitan. His surfaces are polished not for brightness but for sensuousness of effect.

Mr. Stevens is a minor poet. Yet it is not to be inferred that his poems are easily to be dismissed—quite the contrary. Although the present collection is, for the most part, merely a reprinting of an earlier book (only three pieces of which have been eliminated, while fourteen new ones have been added), one is surprised to find how well wear certain of these poems. They have a definite, precise character, a decorative elegance and they will be, one imagines, rather than remote curiosities of the period, one of the distinct values of contemporary poetry, while the bulk of what came of Imagism, one imagines, will have value merely for the scholar, the pedant, the historian.

RAYMOND LARSSON.

Peadar O'Donnell's Jail Journal

The Gates Flew Open, by Peadar O'Donnell. London: Jonathan Cape. 7s. 6d.

READERS of "Adrigoole" and "The Knife" will know that any book Peadar O'Donnell writes will have, whatever else it may lack, vitality, humanity and a sense of human tragedy that bears on the face of it the stamp of authenticity. The latest book from this writer is not a novel. It is a jail journal, except that it has been recollected in tranquillity ten years after the event, thereby gaining in sanity and balance and, such is the sensitiveness of this writer's memory, losing, one feels, nothing of the immediacy of a journal kept on the spot from day to day. Indeed one may find it interesting to compare this book of prison experiences with that of Frank Gallagher, "Days of Fear." It differs by its swiftness and breadth of treatment, whole weeks being passed over in a sentence whereas "Days of Fear" is primarily the reproduction of the feelings, physical and mental, of a man on hunger strike over many days.

The writer has had throughout the wisdom to create first of all a sense of personal reality, to give us the feeling that we know this strange prison-family; and in this connection it might well be said that this book is a man's book, for there is so much eroticism in modern literature that these moving accounts of manly friendship and camaraderie under trying circumstances are refreshing and invigorating. When, therefore, he comes to describe the deaths of men like Liam Mellowes and Rory O'Connor, one's sense of personal loss and tragedy is complete.

This method is followed throughout the book until it actually achieves the effect of reality which, strangely, is associated more commonly with a novel than autobiography; and I can think of no better compliment for the book than that. Character sketches follow one another rapidly. The writer having a sense of drama makes the most of his men and his opportunities. And there is some excellent self-revelation. For example, when he was removed from the internment camp at the Curragh, at a time when almost any prominent man might be executed in reprisal, he had no idea where they were taking him or for what. All these pages are excellent descriptions of a strong man being ridden by fear and fighting to conquer it:

"Where under heavens, was I going? And then it flashed

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APRIL 8

The Calvert Associates take pleasure in announcing the program for the annual meeting in commemoration of the 298th anniversary of the founding of Maryland and the establishment of the principle of religious liberty in America.

Governor Albert C. Ritchie of Maryland

Honorable Joseph M. Proskauer

Justice of the Supreme Court of the New York Appellate Division.

Reverend Richard Blackburn Washington

Lineal descendant of John Augustine Washington, eldest brother of the first President.

The Mediaevalists

The double quartet of the Paulist Choir in a short program of music.

Michael Williams

President of the Calvert Associates, Chairman

Grand Ballroom, Hotel Waldorf-Astoria

Friday, April 8, 8:30 p.m.

All Calvert Associates and their guests are invited to attend. Because of the importance of the occasion a certain section will be reserved. Application for tickets in this reserved section at $1 each will be honored in order of their receipt.

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Grand Central Terminal,
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Enclosed is my check for $..... Kindly send me ..... reserved seat tickets for the annual celebration in commemoration of the founding of Maryland and the establishment of religious liberty in America to be held in the Grand Ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria, April 8, 1932, at 8:30 p.m.

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on me—to Donegal! I was for the slaughter-house now and no mistake, and I was lucky for it was as a challenge the truth struck me and not as a threat. Outside there were green fields. I saw people moving at railway stations and I heard the soft laughter of girls and the cheery voices of men. The world was full of movement and color. And I was going to be slaughtered. But it was daylight when the thought came and I looked out of the window and accepted its challenge."

I could wish to be able to say all the writing is as good as that. There is in parts an almost deliberate scorning of style that amounts to uncouthness, if not unintelligibility. It should be said, too, for the benefit of those who have resented certain elements of "The Knife," that whatever bitternesses have left Peadar O'Donnell, his resentment of the clerical attitude during the Irish Civil War is as alive as ever. But it should leave no hurt on any mind, for it is expressed with an honest directness as from a man who realizes there are other points of view but refuses to abate one jot of his own.

SEAN O'FAOLAIN.

Reconstructing China

The Triple Demism of Sun Yat-Sen, by Paschal M. D. Elia, S.J. Wuchang, China: Franciscan Press. $1.75.

THE TRIPLE DEMISM forms the whole policy of Dr. Sun. Its ideas were interrelated and conceived by their author to form a unique system, on which the resurrection or reconstruction of China, in Dr. Sun's view, depended. These three aspects of reconstruction of China he called demism. In Western terminology this would probably be called nationalism, his political demism would be termed democracy, and for economic demism might not inaccurately be written sociology.

There is not much new thought expressed by Dr. Sun. Throughout each of the lectures, the same thoughts which Karl Marx elaborates, or that Russian Sovietism has advanced, find continuous expression.

The real danger lies in the fact that Dr. Sun was fully alive to the fact that Japan was accepted in the West because it was understood that Japan was ready to defend herself and had shown that she could. This aspect of thought on pages 72 and following, he reiterates in such passages as: "It is because Japan learned from Europe and gradually caught up with her from the time that she introduced reforms, that after the European war . . . Japan sat as one of the five great powers." Or again (page 74): "Since Japan rose to power, not only does the Yamato race rank among the first," etc.

The lectures and addresses are filled with this class of attempt to arouse Chinese pride, using the idea that what one Asiatic people has done, China can do. Dr. Sun also discusses how a tricky slogan can be found. He asserts the French Revolution (page 264) had a slogan, also that England and America use the word "Liberty" as a slogan, so China should appeal to her masses not for liberty but with such a phrase as "Triple Demism Means Wealth."

The translation into English-French of these speeches or lectures is a great feat, for which the translator and the Franciscan Press in Wuchang are to be congratulated. The type, whether Chinese or English, is excellent, while the printing and the accuracy of the several languages, French, Latin, Chinese and English, is most unusual. The volume should find its way into the hands of all those who really desire accurate knowledge of China's attempt under Dr. Sun's political philosophy to solve the questions of her economic and political life.

BOYD-CARPENTER.

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Briefer Mention

Maria Edgeworth: Chosen Letters; edited by F. V. Barry. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.00.

MISS EDGEWORTH was a person of many excellencies, most of them forgotten. It is not strange, therefore, that a selection from her letters should leave the modern reader agreeably surprised to find so much even-tempered eighteenth-century observation blended with a genuinely impressive and personable wit. Though her attitude toward the poor Irish all but horrifies us, there is that in her conception of family life which renders 1932 very conscious of a cavity in its own outlook. Many passages are surprisingly up-to-date. This, for instance: "A maid at the hotel in Dunkirk said to me, 'Ah! Madame, nous autres nous aimons bien de voir rouler les Anglais.' Yes, because they think the English roll in gold." If the wheel of fortune has now substituted Americans for Englishmen, the fact itself abides. Miss Edgeworth's letters are a valuable commentary indeed on the late eighteenth century. Mr. Barry's introduction is helpful.

Philippine, by Maurice Bedel. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. $2.50.

THIS is Gallic wit at the expense of Mr. Mussolini's Italy, with sentimental trimmings, that makes for the often-desired, but rarely found, fast, light and amusing reading. A successful department-store magnate of Paris purchases a political revue in which he advocates for his own disordered Republican country the beneficent effects of a dictatorship. Traveling in Italy with his pretty daughter Philippine as his amanuensis, he is surrounded by spies and spends most of his time before police tribunals explaining away his ardent praises of the Italian system of government. Philippine and a romantic young Italian are likewise under constant surveillance by the police and courts for flirting. The satire is broad and the implications obvious, which permits the reader to be all the more seriously diverted to inoffensive laughter.

Lyric Religion: The Romance of Immortal Hymns, by H. Augustine Smith. New York: The Century Co. $4.00.

PROFESSOR SMITH, well known for his work as an organizer of group singing, offers a large, scholarly but interesting account of some 150 hymns. In each case text and history are followed by a practical analysis of the song from the choir's point of view. The writer is definitely Protestant in sympathy and outlook, and of course his material is largely intended for Protestant audiences. But barring some remarks anent the Oxford Movement and failure to indicate that the creators of "Stille Nacht" were a Catholic priest and his organist, there is little to be urged against the volume. It should prove useful and popular.

Words Confused and Misused, by Maurice H. Weseen. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. $2.00.

PROFESSOR WESEEN offers a new, practical book of synonyms arranged in a relatively novel manner. Words often confused are placed side by side, and the real difference between the two is carefully elucidated. In most instances the discussion is helpful, and the book should contribute to defending the king's English from gross insult and malicious attack. But there have been many similar volumes—to what avail?

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Germany's Road to Ruin, by Karl Friedrich Nowak. New York: The Macmillan Company. $5.00.

HERR NOWAK, more or less in collaboration with ex-Kaiser Wilhelm II, is engaged in writing a history of the years which preceded the defeat of imperial Germany. The present volume—a sequel to "Kaiser and Chancellor"—carries the story through the middle years of the kaiser's reign, outlining such important diplomatic events as the abandonment of the secret treaty with Russia, the endeavor to foster amity with Britain, the crass refusal to accept Britain's final offer of a defensive alliance, the Tangier incident and the famous Kreuger telegram. All in all it is a pretty complete demonstration that the destinies of Germany were, in those days, presided over by asses of epochal dimensions. The underlying purpose of Herr Nowak's book is to show that the kaiser was far more intelligent, honest and humane than his advisers. Nevertheless he is not a propagandist but an unusually painstaking historian and a brilliant writer. When finished his treatise will have lasting importance.

That Girl, by Jacques Deval. New York: The Viking Press. $2.50.

THIS is hardly Sunday-school reading, as the protagonist is what in the euphemism of a past era was referred to as a professional woman. Accepting the premises of unmorality, or complete invincible ignorance of an integrated and rationalized Christian way of life, the book has great poignance and tragic beauty. The scene is the native city adjacent to the Panama Canal Zone and the background is tropically colorful. Chérie, that girl, endures life in the hope of returning to her *belle France*. This is her only and her guiding love. Through plots and counter-plots of conspiracies against and for the defense of the canal, Chérie sells herself to accumulate money for her passage home. These plots and the story of the book, however, are dominated by the intangible, lonely thoughts of the girl that persist above the clash of circumstances that sweep her along, and she arouses the profoundest and purest emotions of respect and pity for her mutilated life.

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